

Wells 1800

CONSTANTIA NEVILLE;

OR,

THE WEST INDIAN.

A NOVEL.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY

HELENA WELLS,

AUTHOR OF "THE STEP-MOTHER," &c.

———Behold the ways
Of Heaven's eternal destiny to man,
For ever just, benevolent and wise:
That *Virtue's* awful steps, how'er pursued
By vexing Fortune and intrusive pain,
Should never be divided from her chaste,
Her fair attendant, *Pleasure*.

AKENSIDE.

VOL. III.

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CONSTANTIA NEVILLE;

OR,

THE WEST INDIAN.

CHAP. XXIII.

Whoe'er amidst the sons
Of reason, valour, liberty, and virtue,
Displays distinguished merit, is a noble
Of Nature's own creating.

THOMSON.

TWO days after her visit to St. Helen's, Miss Neville received a note from Mr. Lambton, requesting that she would dine with him in chambers that day, when he hoped the deeds would be ready for signing, which, when com-

pleted, were to exonerate her from all claims at present in force against her, either on her own or her brother's account ; Mrs. Lambton joining her husband in good wishes, though not in the invitation, led Constantia to conclude, that she would be of the party to dinner ; and that another person might be included in it besides Mr. Dornford, she involuntarily wished ; though the moment after she was tempted to ask herself, of what avail would be the cultivating a friendship for De Eresby, at a time when there was so little probability of their meeting on an equal footing in society ? “ How my heart sickens at the bare possibility of being condemned to associate with the uneducated and purse proud ! at such a moment to meet a man of his talents who, even under a disguise, was attracted towards me, as I most assuredly was to him ; “ Oh ! ” cried Constantia, “ it is too much, why was I formed with such

perceptions? To what purpose have I had bestowed upon me discriminating powers, from the exercise of which nothing can result but bitter disappointment." Recollecting herself, however, she implored mercy and forgiveness of that power whose wisdom and goodness she had dared to arraign, while she determined, that in future, she would keep a strict guard on her thoughts, since she had discovered them to be so prone to that which was evil.

Hoping that a few months would effect a great change in her circumstances, Miss Neville, to avoid making those sacrifices which, from her experience at Mr. Rochford's, she was convinced would be required from her in entering into any family in a dependent character, she resolved on remaining with Mrs Younger for the summer, during which time she intended to employ her needle and her pencil in fabricating various ornaments for dress, the

disposal of which articles, she trusted, would help to maintain her, while the employment would occupy her time ; and thus having a certain pursuit, her mind would be under better regulation than when brooding on the past, or vainly striving to anticipate the future. " If," said she, " I conduct myself with propriety, so as to retain the good opinion and countenance of a few whose friendship and regard have been voluntarily bestowed upon me, am I not upon an equality with De Eresby ?" I am still Mr. Neville's daughter, and while I adhere to his precepts, and commit no base action to disgrace his name, am entitled to rank as such. Could I at this moment consent to forego the protection assured to " the seed of the righteous," to be the heiress of ill-gotten wealth ? Surely not ! Of what then have I to complain ? the cloud which now obscures me, may in time be dispersed ; I will not, therefore, de-

prive myself of unsought good, in which light I at present consider the offered esteem and regard of the adopted son of my amiable preceptor, because it is presented to me when the world may deem his conferring it an honour. If he fail in treating me with the respect to which I consider myself entitled, from his finding me under the humble roof of the *poor widow*, I shall have abundant reason to rejoice that I knew him not when mistress of my brother's house; his character would not then have admitted of so speedy a development."

Pursuant to these reflections Miss Neville resolved, that should Mr. De Eresby be of the company at dinner, and appear as much in the good graces of Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, as she presumed he would be, if he offered to attend her home, and seemed desirous of being admitted to wait upon her, she would grant him permission; on his

use or abuse of which privilege would rest the continuance or discontinuance of the acquaintance.

In consequence of entering into this scrutiny before she set out for Mr. Lambton's, Constantia, when his guest seemed to have forgotten the unpleasant business that had occasioned the assembling of the company, who on their part strove to do the same, the men of law enjoying the ease and freedom of which so small a party admitted, while the presence of ladies gave a spirited turn to the conversation, which might otherwise have leant to the discussion of politics, a theme so inexhaustible, that all who wish to talk are happy to introduce it; every Briton believing himself fully competent to give advice to the Premier, and not a few ambitious of gaining the ear of his Sovereign, to point out to his observation the errors of those in whose hands he has placed the power of distributing justice. Into

the advantages which might result from such communications, it is not our business to enquire ; having quite affairs enough of our own to arrange, we leave such investigations to the idle, while we acquaint our readers with the issue of Miss Norcliffe's tragi-comic adventures, not doubting that they expect to be edified with some of her lucubrations composed in her *country lodgings in St. George's Fields*.

According to Mr. Dornford's prediction, the lady, when she arrived at the coffee-house, found none of those who met her there at all disposed to accompany her into court ; on the contrary, they were unanimous in recommending a compromise, stating the indelible stain which the publication of such facts in a news-paper must leave on her character ; and though in the first instance the silence of their editors had been purchased, yet no person would take the trouble of doing so a

second time. This argument had more weight than any hitherto urged. The love of celebrity might have smoothed the road to a prison, but the love of reputation now absorbed all other considerations. Contrary to her fixed resolutions, mutual forgiveness was exchanged, without Mr. Horwood's consenting to the interview which she had demanded. "Whether she will as readily relinquish her plan of passing over into France, to join the worthies who, according to her account, are strenuously endeavouring to diffuse the blessings of freedom through the habitable globe, I cannot pretend to determine," continued Mr. Dornford to Constantia, (who had been making the enquiry,) "all I know, is, that I rejoice most heartily at such a conclusion of the business; for, to say the truth, I began to be heartily ashamed of my client."

Mr. Lambton then rallied Miss Ne-

ville on her visit to the bachelor, who had since said so many handsome things of her, that he should not be surprised to see him throw aside his parchments, and set about composing verses in her praise." Mr. Dornford having previously left the room, this jest of Mr. Lambton's served only to raise a laugh, in which De Eresby, with a very ill-grace affected to join. The connection of the Neville family with that of his patron, now became the subject of discourse ; Mr. Lambton speaking of the latter with an affectionate regret, heightened by discovering how unfairly his life had been lost.

Business being settled, Constantia communicated to Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, her intention to continue for the present at West-place, conceiving, from their not repeating Ned Carleton's name, that they saw, with her, the impropriety of her having any connection with either him or his sister, she

forbore to revert to what had passed between them on the subject. Mr. Lambton, however, could not avoid saying how much he had been hurt by the inconsistency of the young man's conduct; whose want of gratitude for attentions conferred on him during the life-time of his father, when no one knew what his fortune might be, and therefore could not be influenced by mercenary motives, proved him to be little worthy of regard, and must in the end deprive him of the friendship of all who did not court him for the sake of profit. "I understand," continued Mr. Lambton, "he has a variety of plans for his sister, but neither Mrs. Lambton, nor I, will give our opinions as to the preference to be given to any, even though our advice should be asked, which it is more than probable it never will be. After you have been at Hampstead, and the sale is over, you must come and stay a few days with us

at Clapton, when we can converse on many subjects that will not bear discussion now. In the meantime it gives us pleasure to know that you are so comfortably situated." Mrs. Lambton joining her husband in requesting her company at Clapton, Constantia promised, as soon as the regulation of her affairs would permit, to comply with their friendly invitation. Mr. Dornford and Mr. De Eresby returning to take their tea with the ladies, the conversation again became general, nor would it have been easily concluded, had not the announcing of Mr. Lambton's carriage reminded his fair visitor how distant she was from home. On rising to go out, she was bidden by her landlord to put herself under the protection of the law, and Mr. De Eresby immediately springing forward to offer his services, they were accepted without hesitation; nor did she, at the conclusion of her walk, omit to say to him,

that having now determined to remain for some time at West-place, she should be happy to see Mr. De Eresby there, when business led him that way; the uncertainty of finding her at home, she hoped, would prevent his coming so great a distance on purpose to wait upon her. The answer of the gentleman may be easily conceived; nor does it require much penetration to discover, that had Miss Neville resided as many miles from Lincoln's-inn, as she did furlongs, the barrister would have contrived matters so, that the road to her habitation should lie very little out of his way.

Reared and educated as a child of chance, De Eresby, (to whom nature had been extremely bountiful, both as to the endowments of the mind and a prepossessing exterior) had at a very early age reflected, that his whole success in life depended on the use which he made of the opportunities for re-

ceiving instruction, which by the singular goodness of worthy characters, and the apparent interposition of Divine Providence, were afforded him. The only recollection he had of his infantine years was, that being accustomed to play in the corn-fields, while his parents and others were talking to the reapers, or enjoying the breeze after the fatigues of the day, one evening, just as they were going to lift him into the large cart drawn by oxen, in which they generally returned home, a dismal yell from an adjoining wood struck terror and dismay into all who heard it, nor did any person stay to discover from what kind of creature or creatures it proceeded, every one flying with the utmost precipitation in an opposite direction. Unable to seek shelter in flight, he hid himself in a knot of bushes ; and, though repeatedly called to by his christian name of Luke, he felt too timorous to emerge from his

concealment, till sometime after, when on a firebrand being thrown into it, he burst forth, and found himself surrounded by a number of Indians, whose dreadful gesticulations and horrid cries, almost deprived him of his senses. After some deliberation, he was taken up by one of the savages, and bound on the back of a woman, the company agreeing to return to their own village, finding little chance of plunder, and hoping, as was afterwards thought, that a ransom would be offered for the child of whom they had thus made a captive *. Being disappointed in this expectation, and considering a white boy as an incumbrance, it was determined to put him to death, when the woman who had taken charge of him, on his being first taken prisoner, claimed

* A similar circumstance was related to the author, by a gentleman who was himself thus miraculously preserved by savages, and restored to society.

him as her son, promising to take on herself all the trouble and inconvenience that should attend his preservation. Fortunately for the little captive, the person so interested in his favour was the favourite *Squaw* of one of the chiefs, and on that account her intercession proved of utility, not only in rescuing him from the knife then suspended over his head, but in ensuring his future safety ; for any injury or insult offered to one whom the warrior considered of his household, the tribe well knew, would have been avenged in a most summary manner. The copper-coloured dame soon felt for her son, by adoption, all the tenderness of a parent ; she shared with him the maternal attentions bestowed on her own offspring, to whom the little Luke was nowise displeasing. At the end of three years, when the chiefs of the Miami and Illinois, were invited to smoke the weed of peace, and hold a

talk with the white men in the great city of New-York, Ockonnastota and his squaw went thither, taking with them the son of the Englishman, a voluntary surrender of whom, the chief considered, would be a means of covering many enormities practised by his followers on the defenceless inhabitants of the frontiers. The Indian mother of Luke knew not the intentions of her master, or she never would have consented to part from her white son, as she styled him, nor were the bonds of affection on his part less entwined with the best feelings of his heart than her's. Insensible from his extreme youth to the magnitude of the obligations she had at first conferred upon him, he knew her, as he advanced in years, only as an affectionate parent, whose commands, both duty and inclination prompted him to obey. When the group arrived at New-York, Master Luke, now seven years old, and ha-

bited as a savage, excited no small degree of attention. The governor, after a serious and minute enquiry, could discover no traces of the person or persons to whom the child belonged ; and though accounts were inserted in the public papers, enumerating the particulars, such as the year and month at which the boy had been stolen, and the precise spot where the irruption, as described by the savages, had been made, none appeared to interest themselves in the fate of a relation so miraculously restored to society. A subscription having been raised for him soon after his entrance into town with the Indians, he was, by orders of the governor, clothed according to the English fashion ; a mode of dress, by this time, considered extremely irksome by the child of the woods, who had for years never experienced the confinement of a ligature.

Mr. De Eresby, of Barbadoes, at

that time on a visit to his uncle the governor of New York, frequently conversed with the young stranger, whose remarks on what he saw, and account of his manner of life among the savages, were so superior to what might have been expected from his age, as to lead Mr. De Eresby to form the plan, which he afterwards executed, of sending him to England to be educated ; not doubting, that in so doing he would contribute to the advancement of the designs of Providence, conceiving from the extraordinary preservation of the boy that his life was of more than common value. The sums that had been collected previous to Mr. De Eresby's taking young Luke under his immediate protection, sufficed to fit him out for his voyage, and to pay the expences of his passage. He was put under the particular care of the Captain, who, on the governor's account, was sure to pay him proper attention. The interest of

the family of De Eresby in England was so powerful, that no doubt remained in the mind of the protector of Luke, but that through the influence of some of its members, he would be admitted on one of the foundations to receive his school learning free of expence. The strong recommendatory letter which his *Protegée* brought to Mr. Lambton to induce him to exercise a fatherly care, and to keep a strict watch over his conduct and morals, was consequently accompanied by others, addressed to persons of respectability, to whose patronage he was also recommended in the warmest terms. The boy soon established himself as a favourite with Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, who, having no children, were the more readily induced to consider him in the light of a son. The singularity of his story drew many of the connections of Mr. De Eresby from the West end of the town to see him; while

others, concluding that such disinterested affection for the offspring of a stranger was by no means likely to exist; contented themselves with supposing the child to be a natural son, whom the father did not choose to desert, though he hesitated to acknowledge him openly. From one cause or another, master Luke (now De Eresby) was much inquired for, and in six months after his arrival in England, was admitted to a participation of the advantages enjoyed by those who are placed by the nomination of certain governors on the foundation in the school belonging to the Charter-house. His oratorical powers had so frequently displayed themselves among his comrades, that often when divisions arose among them (which will happen in every community, whether composed of children or persons more advanced in life), he was unanimously chosen umpire and redresser of grievances;

all agreeing to abide by his decisions, for he possessed the happy art of making those pleased with themselves, who only imagined they were admiring him. The liberal allowance granted by Mr. De Eresby for his maintenance, was expended by Mr. Lambton with so rigid an attention to economy, that when, on the sudden death of the former, the supplies were stopped, there yet remained a considerable sum in his hands. The talents of the youth having so soon pointed to the higher walks of Mr. Lambton's own profession, he determined that he should be furnished with the means for pursuing it, which from his having an exhibition to the university, and no taste for expensive amusements, did not amount to so much as might have been expected. Declaring his intention to that effect, young De Eresby had the unspeakable satisfaction of knowing that his progress in knowledge had been such as to exceed

the expectations of his instructors, and his conduct in every material instance perfectly consonant to the wishes of the person to whom alone, on the death of his first friend, he could look for protection and support.

When called to the bar, the young American gave the most convincing proofs that he had not mistaken his talent. Mr. Lambton was a considerable proprietor of East India stock, and to give his young friend an opportunity of trying the strength of his powers, by joining in the debates in the Court of Proprietors, he transferred to him a sufficient portion of stock to enable him to appear there as a person who had an interest in the proceedings of the court. His speeches on various occasions were found to be so replete with information, and his mode of reasoning so conclusive, that his reputation as a speaker was at once established ; and from the style in which he

declaimed, as well as the side he professed to support, he was considered as a person who had studied the affairs of India with sufficient accuracy to be engaged as the junior counsel in a great cause then occupying the attention of the public. This distinction procured him the notice of some who had, on the death of his first protector, banished him from their remembrance. Counsellor De Eresby was, in the opinion of many, likely to rise to the head of his profession; consequently no family could be disgraced by acknowledging him as a scion of theirs. Sensible by this time of his own importance, and seeking favour from none who imagined their acquaintance would confer more honour on him than his did on them, De Eresby was, in spite of the combination of circumstances (such as want of family connections, paternal fortune, &c.), which in most cases would have retarded the progress of a

young student of the law, surmounting all his difficulties, and bidding fair to become an ornament to whatever family should at any future period claim him as their son.

To relieve himself from intense application by relaxing from his usual habits, he went down to Brighton for a few weeks, where, among its fair visitants, he in vain sought for a rational companion, with whom he might converse on subjects more congenial to his taste, than enumerating the names of the successful candidates for the various raffles ; the number of titled people daily to be remarked on the Stein, with the endless repetition of the scandal of the fashionable world, which in most places of genteel resort assail the ears of all who, apparently engrossed by the publication in their hands, are compelled to sit near those whose gratification in going to the library, arises from the probability of attracting notice by the

loudness of their tones, and the volubility of their speech, rather than from any latent hope of benefitting from a conversation with their friends on the shelf, or those seated round the table of the librarian.

From very obvious causes, the female acquaintance of De Eresby was limited to a narrow circle ; in London, his engagements were of too imperious a nature to admit of his cultivating the acquaintance of family men ; at a watering place, he wanted that easy assurance which can thrust itself anywhere. He was quitting the place in disgust, when a Caledonian friend of his requested him to join a party to Mrs. Rochford's masquerade, offering him a ticket and the dress of a Highlander, which had been sent down from London for a gentleman, for whom an express had that morning arrived, summoning him to attend a dying relation. This proposal held out a prospect of so

much variety, that the lawyer most willingly acceded to it, though a little fearful of not being able to personate the character to his satisfaction. His friend, meaning to go as an *auld Highland wife*, promised to be at hand to succour him, if attacked by any person whose knowledge of the dialect or country of Scotland exceeded his own. Sick of the inanity of the crowd in which he was mingling, the spirit and good sense of the fair Pilgrim reanimated his whole frame. He sought to discover who were her party, and failing in that, to inspire confidence by making himself known. His want of success in both of these attempts on the night of the masquerade, did not altogether dispirit him, as he hoped either in the rooms, or at some of the morning lounges, to learn the name and connections of a woman, who, he was convinced, could not appear without being distinguished for her talents. After a

fruitless search he returned to London, most ardently hoping that, if not already linked in Hymen's bonds, he might there meet her whom he in vain strove to forget. Soon absorbed by the duties of his profession, the idea of the charming Pilgrim faded from his remembrance, except when recalled to it by contrasting her supposed perfections with the levities and giddy imper tinencies of many of the fair, who at other entertainments of the same kind wore similar habits.

On hearing Miss Neville's conversation with Miss Norcliffe, when he accidentally broke in upon the trio, in chambers, De Eresby was convinced that the tones of her voice were familiar to his ear. His attention was arrested, his admiration excited, and his imagination suffered "to wander in an unknown field," to recollect, if possible, where he could have become acquainted with them. The disclosures

that followed the dismissal of Miss Norcliffe, gave to the heart of De Eresby sensations of delight that it had never before experienced. To find that the picture he had drawn of mental perfection was now realized, and that from the peculiar circumstances in which the object of his admiration was placed, he might possibly have an opportunity of rendering her service, and of securing her esteem and confidence in an early stage of their acquaintance, were gratifications so un hoped for, that De Eresby could scarcely refrain from considering the incidents of the afternoon as an illusion of the senses.

In parting from Miss Neville, the invention of De Eresby was on the stretch to devise expedients for waiting upon her without appearing obtrusive. Secluded as she was from society, there was little chance of their meeting anywhere, but at her own place of abode ; for should she visit at Mr. Lambton's,

if he were not invited there at the same time that she was, he could not presume to join the party, though he should even discover the day on which she was to be a guest. This difficulty we have seen obviated, and we have only to remark, that the second interview increased the admiration which the first had excited. Superior to affectation, Constantia concealed not the pleasure which she experienced in conversing with one whose aim it was to inspire confidence, by talking openly of the obscurity in which his origin was shrouded, and the regrets which for many years had corroded his bosom, on account of his not being able to absent himself for so long a time from the duties of his profession, as would suffice to undertake a voyage to America, with a view of there obtaining some information of his family. "I have now," continued De Eresby, "ceased to indulge a hope that I may be acknow-

ledged ; and if I durst flatter myself that, as the adopted son of my preserver, I may look forward to securing your friendship and esteem, I shall have little cause to lament my want of family connections." Constantia in reply assured him, that the affection he had awakened in her long-lamented friend and preceptor, was a better passport to her good opinion, than any other which as a stranger he could have procured. " You must endeavour," added she, " to prove to me that I am no unskilful physiognomist ; for on the night of the masquerade I was told you were a very dangerous character, and a slave to the basest of passions. Before I ascertained that you really were not the gambler of whom I had heard so much, I gave you credit for possessing qualities that must have impelled you to pursuits very different from what occupy the attention of those who pass the best years of their lives in ruining their own fortunes, and

the remainder in seeking to ruin that of their neighbours." "Thank you a thousand times for this confession," said De Eresby, with increased animation, "you did then bestow a thought on your reel partner, while he was mourning the impossibility of discovering the Pilgrim whose conversation had enchanted him." At this interesting period, the door of Mrs. Younger's house being opened by herself to admit her fair lodger, Constantia could only grant the admission of De Eresby's visits in the manner before related. His desire to avail himself of so inestimable a privilege, led him to enquire for her two days after, when his ill stars so ordained that the object which now engrossed his attention, should have departed that morning to make a final removal of her effects from Hampstead.

CHAP. XXIV.

If I am traduced by ignorant tongues, which neither know

My faculties nor person, yet will be
The chronicle of my doing; let me say,
'Tis but the fate of place, and the rough brake,
That virtue must go through.

SHAKESPEARE.

AS Constantia drove up to the house which she had but a few weeks before quitted, under impressions too painful to be recollected, without probing her feelings almost beyond the power of endurance, her heart sickened, her fortitude forsook her, and it was with extreme difficulty that she supported herself from the coach-door to that of the parlour, in which she had been accustomed to sit. The face of desolation which every object formerly

familiar to her view, now wore, was not calculated to revive her spirits.

Ignorant as she was of the general opinion formed by her neighbours when her brother's conduct, and its consequences, became public, Constantia yet dreaded to meet the scrutinizing regards of many, whose pity she might awaken, while her own native independence of mind taught her to consider that she was still their superior, as she had learned a lesson in the school of adversity, which she would not have exchanged for the luxurious ease with which they were apparently surrounded, that of limiting her desires to the means which she might possess of gratifying them. Firm and steadfast in the practice of virtue, she knew not that the unfortunate were too often confounded with the guilty; and that, in her case, Rumour with her hundred tongues had been busily employed in propagating tales of scandal,

in which she was a most prominent figure.

Mrs. Geary could not refrain from communicating some reports so injurious to the moral character of the person at whom they were levelled, as to induce Constantia to wish that she had sacrificed the relics of her property, rather than have come among a set of people capable of seeking to deprive an unprotected woman of what should be dearer to her than life, and without which her existence would be scarcely worth preserving. "Thank heaven!" she exclaimed, (when left by Mrs. Geary to her own meditations) "I do not deserve these imputations. I well know that I am a frail erring mortal; but never can I accuse myself of wantonly wounding the peace of a fellow-creature, much less of sowing the seeds of connubial disquiet, or endeavouring to weaken a husband's respect for his wife. My poverty is now my pride;

that must give the lie to the assertions of my enemies. A woman surrounded by male friends ever ready to contribute to her amusement, will not be deserted by them while in possession of the same attractions that drew them towards her. The solitude in which I intend to pass my time would to such a person have a thousand terrors; to me it opens sources of consolation superior to any that an association with the generality of the world could procure; the society of a chosen few, who honour me with their esteem and regard, will amply repay me for intended slights that cannot wound me; as it is necessary to respect the party by whom they are offered, to feel that they are such."

Thus, roused to exertion, all the softer emotions were subdued. Constantia selected her own wardrobe, and the other necessities that she should require while an inmate of Mrs. Younger's house, from a quantity of linen and

other articles left to her by her parents ; the latter of which she packed up in chests, trusting that Mr. Clark would allow her to place them for safety in one of his upper rooms, his sister having suggested that his compliance to such a request would be immediately obtained. Taking an inventory of that part of the furniture, the proceeds of which were to be paid to herself, she hoped that the amount of the sales would not only suffice to discharge her debts, but leave a residue in her hands, which, added to the fruits of her own industry, would enable her to adhere to her intention of remaining in West Place till advices from the West Indies should show, what dependence was to be placed on the efforts of Montagu for retrieving his character, and satisfying the demands of his creditors. Thus busily employed in works of necessity, the acuteness of her sensations on her first entrance, and her indigna-

tion at the intelligence of the loquacious Mrs. Geary, were almost equally forgotten. A night of undisturbed repose gave the rosy tint of health to her countenance, and the cheerful resignation beaming in every line, did not indicate to the spectator that aught had occurred to interrupt the tranquillity within.

A friendly visit from Mrs. Wetherall, was received with due gratitude, as it served to prove that she was uninfected by the suspicions which the reports of her neighbours had a tendency to create. This lady was surprised at the resolution that was displayed in the conversation and the conduct of her friend. Married early in life, she had never known what it was to depend solely on herself for support. Clinging for protection to a beloved object, who warded off the real ills of life, she had encountered many that were imaginary, which it is well known are the most difficult

to be borne, as the power that creates them never relaxes from her employment, and though some are conquered, others perpetually rise in succession to occupy the places yielded to them by the former. Notwithstanding this conviction, which unreserved intimacy between the parties carried home to the mind of Constantia, she both sincerely esteemed and loved Mrs. Wetherall. The goodness of her heart, the simplicity of her manners, her affection for her children, and her fondness for domestic pleasures in preference to the amusements which engross the attention of so many married women; but, above all, her invariable kindness to herself, awakened in the heart of Constantia a sentiment more fraught with tenderness, than could have been inspired by one whose mental acquirements were upon a level with her own. To have been wilfully guilty of wounding the peace of such a woman, she

would have considered as a crime too heinous ever to be forgiven.

They parted, mutually pleased with each other, and regretting that the distance which was now to divide them, would prevent a renewal of that friendly intercourse from which both had derived so much satisfaction. Soothed by the accents of friendship from a person whom she had reason to believed incensed against her by misrepresentation, Constantia felt at peace with all the world; her heart glowed with the same benevolence as if she had never experienced the lash of the malignant, whose innate depravity had led them to impute to her designs, of which the rectitude of her own principles had not furnished her with a single idea.

In her eager desire to relate what was unpleasant, Mrs. Geary had, till now, omitted to mention a visitor to Miss Neville, whose anxious solicitude

for her health and safety did honour to his feelings, as much as it gratified those of the party to whom such a mark of respectful attention had been paid.

Mr. Hamilton, though a creditor of the brother to a considerable amount, was shocked at perceiving by the statement of his affairs, how much the interests of his sister had been sacrificed. Impelled, therefore, by the most friendly motives, he had ridden to Hampstead, to offer his services to Miss Neville, and to assure her that whenever she thought proper to honour him with a communication, it would afford him the sincerest pleasure to execute her commands; and he doubted not, from his influence with the persons concerned, that any proposal made by him for her benefit would be immediately acceded to. The perusal of this hurried note, written with a pencil on a cover of a letter, and entrusted to

the care of Geary, whom he recognized from going to the compting-house, and considered as above the rank of a servant, convinced the person to whom it was addressed, that the writer had never ceased to regard her as a friend, and that she might, without hesitation (if requisite) avail herself of assistance so openly tendered.

All matters being arranged for the entrance of the auctioneer, Constantia returned from Hampstead in much better spirits than she had gone thither. Mrs. Younger presenting her with Dé Eresby's card, she could scarcely help smiling at the recollection of what her late neighbours had said; of her being more partial to the society of the one sex than the other. "If they knew," (thought she) "that two men so immersed in business, of the respectability which is attached to the characters both of the lawyer and the merchant, were devoting so much of their

time and attention to my affairs, they would be still more disposed to call me artful and designing; I have, however, this reflection to console myself with, that it is beyond their power to make me otherwise than I am. Sorrow may subdue the vigour of the body, but the mind will, I trust, retain its sanity. I shall, therefore, never lose my abhorrence of evil, because I have been suspected of wooing its embrace."

A few days passed away without any incident to mark them; when she was surprised by the following letter from her aunt, forwarded to her by post from Hampstead.

Chesterfield, July 10th, 179—

" MY DEAR NIECE,

" Being much surprised by a visit from my Nephew in his way to Scotland, where he said he was going to pass a few weeks or months, till some affair in which he had been engaged

was settled to his satisfaction; this was considerably augmented by my observing in the London news-paper an advertisement, expressing that his effects were to be disposed of by public sale, in consequence of their proprietor's being gone abroad. I was engaged with company when he called upon me, and he appeared very desirous of escaping observation; which prevented me from making those minute enquiries respecting you, that I should otherwise have done. I fear that my nephew has deceived me as to the cause of his retiring from London; and I am also apprehensive, that any little property which devolved to you, may have been squandered by him; for I accidentally heard very lately, that he was too much at the west end of the town, to be enabled to fulfil his engagements in the city, and that all his father's friends had given up his acquaintance.

“ The same person told me, that my

nephew Bellmour, of whom I have not thought for some years, was intending to come to England to claim a barony, which was supposed to have been extinct by the death of the last possessor, though it seems this politic broken merchant can prove his claims to the title. Should he succeed in substantiating them, the man who left the selling of gloves, by which he could maintain his family, for the vanity of being called *my Lord*, and residing where he can scarcely support a requisite establishment, will find one of the peerage less entitled to respect than himself. Seriously speaking, however, I am grieved to think that your father, with all his cleverness, should have been so deceived in this young man, Bellmour; while he pretended that he could not raise money to purchase bills to lessen his account with him, he was, to my certain knowledge, remitting sums to Lancashire, to support his wife's mo-

ther, who, on her daughter's marrying him, became a personage of no small consequence at Ulverston, where she now resides. This it is to be obliged to depend for support on the profits of a business. I am thankful that my son has been bred to the church, and that the fortune left him by his father is vested in securities that are not liable to concussions, like those which affect the property of persons engaged in commerce.

“ Though I may have appeared to slight you, my dear niece, do not imagine that I am indifferent to your welfare. I do not ask you to come and live with me, because I fear that you would find a constant residence in Chesterfield not much adapted to your taste; but when ever you feel disposed for a country jaunt, I shall expect to have due notice; and the longer you make your visit, the more agreeable it will be to your affectionate Aunt,

“ A. WILLIAMSON.”

“ Pray let me know by return of post, where you are, and what obliged my Nephew to make so precipitate a retreat from the capital.”

The contents of this letter did not excite the most pleasurable emotions in the bosom of the party to whom it was addressed. It seemed evidently written with a view to assert the pre-eminence of the writer and her family, over those who survived of her two sisters, (Mrs. Bellmour having paid the debt of nature some years before); nor did the chilling invitation with which the epistle concluded, at all compensate for the contemptuous mention of her father. Determined, however, not to reject advances to intimacy, though a little displeased by the manner in which they were made, Constantia lost no time in answering the enquiries of her aunt, declaring her willingness to pass a few months under

her protection, as soon as her affairs would admit of her removing to so great a distance from London.

She had scarcely time to entrust her packet to the care of Mrs. Younger, to be transmitted to the post, when De Eresby was announced. Business was the plea urged by the gentleman for his visit, though it was evident that any junior clerk of Messrs. Lambton and Dornford could have transacted all that then pressed for discussion. The conversation which ensued tended still farther to increase the regard which had been always reciprocal. De Eresby, on his departure from West-place, thought it expedient to examine his own heart, as to the nature of its sensations for Miss Neville; and when convinced that it was wholly impressed by her idea, he found his judgment so satisfied with his choice, that he dreaded lest some favoured rival should have already secured her affections.

The possibility of being himself successful, diffused too much happiness and delight through his whole frame, to allow of its indulgence, while yet so little capable of judging whether the bitterest disappointment would not be the result of a declaration of his sentiments.

Accustomed from childhood to act for himself, De Eresby imagined that in taking a step likely to contribute to his present felicity, and in the consequences of which were interwoven the comforts of his future life, he had no person to consult who had a right to check the dictates of inclination when they militated not against prudence.

Fraught with the warmest affections, and little disposed to enter into the dissipations of London, De Eresby had long wished for a faithful friend and companion, in whose rational conversation and affectionate endearments, he might spend those hours of relaxation

from study, which his temperate habits made more numerous than could have been believed by those who knew the nature and extent of his professional engagements. Without rank or connections, he neither bowed with servility to those who possessed these advantages, nor did he affect to despise them as unnecessary passports to distinction. He, however, reprobated the idea of endeavouring to bury his own dubious parentage in an alliance with a family whose splendid quarterings and armorial bearings would confer lustre on all connected with it. On declaring to those with whom he was on terms of intimacy, his wish to marry, he has jocosely said, that he would sooner take an *Indian Square*, from among his old friends on the other side of the Atlantic, than seek a wife reared by the *high-born, high-bred* dames of Britain. Such being the sentiments of Miss Neville's present admirer, her want of fortune was no

obstacle to his wishing to become her legal protector from future ills; on the contrary, had he not seen her contending with misfortune, and rising so superior to its shocks, he could not so readily have discovered that she possessed the requisites which he deemed most essential in a companion for life.

A desire to fulfil her promise to Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, before she began any piece of work which would require constant attention, led Constantia to Clapton, where she soon learned that she must place very little dependence on any residue from the sale of her furniture, the expences attending it having amounted to a much larger sum than she expected; as, however, there had been money received to discharge the bills which were lodged in Mr. Lambton's hands for the purpose of being immediately settled, she hoped still to be able to pursue her plan of continuing with Mrs. Younger.

Soon after Miss Neville became a guest of Mr. and Mrs. Lambton's, they informed her that they intended to dine in town the next day, at a friend's house, whither they meant that she should accompany them. It was in vain that she remonstrated on the impropriety of her going into mixed companies, while so uncertain as to her future prospects; Mr. and Mrs. Lambton would take no refusal, conceiving that there was no necessity for her banishing herself from society, because of her being deprived of the power of receiving company at home. Thus strongly urged, Constantia gave a reluctant consent, for which she was most amply repaid by the unexpected pleasure of meeting De Eresby, who was the only person invited by the family to whom the visit was paid, excepting their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Lambton; the party were so well satisfied with each other, that they strove to prolong

the pleasure derived from their meeting, by adjourning to Vauxhall, the weather being uncommonly favourable for partaking of the amusements of the gardens. To have contended against the wishes of a party of friends met to be sociable, would have required more courage than fell to the lot of Constantia. Accustomed to contribute her quota to the general entertainment, as far as her abilities would permit, she knew not that many of her sex are never happier, than when, through their means, any little projected party of pleasure falls to the ground. The animation beaming in every feature of De Eresby, on finding Mr. Lambton's proposal unanimously agreed to, made its way to hers; gay from innocence and rectitude of intention, her countenance took its original expression; free from levity as devoid of art, she diffused to all a portion of that vivacity which sat so easily on her, that persons

of a saturnine complexion with whom she associated, have often envied in her what in another they could not have tolerated.

Arrived at the spot where every person on entering seems to banish care, Miss Neville enjoyed the scene not the less for participating its pleasures with De Eresby, to whose protection Mr. Lambton had consigned her, when they alighted from the carriage. After listening to one or two songs, and taking some turns in the public walks, (during which promenade they observed many of their acquaintance) Miss Plimpton and a very dashing party with her attracted their notice. The rude survey which she took of his fair charge, roused the indignation of the high-spirited De Eresby; nor was it subdued by his overhearing Miss Plimpton say to the person next to her, "Yes, 'tis very true, I once did visit Miss Neville; but I *cut her*, (to use a cant phrase, which

does not pass current but in the polite regions where fashion keeps her court) last winter; and I am sure I shall not make up to her now. Did you observe that any body was with her besides the Counsellor?" At this very instant Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, with their friends, came up to Constantia, to point out to her the box that they had just engaged, and to say at what time they meant to sup. The disappointed look and manner with which Miss Plimpton drew off her party, for fear they should observe, and name in her hearing, the respectable characters by which the proud *West Indian* (as she had formerly styled Miss Neville) was surrounded, must have been witnessed, in order that its expression might be fully understood or described. Mr. Lambton's party returned home at an early hour, having stayed long enough to enjoy the delights of Vauxhall without exposing themselves to view scenes of riot and noise,

such as are too often acted there; the personages who perform the principal characters in them not unfrequently being led to do so from a love of celebrity, it requiring far less courage to insult the weak and unprotected, than to preserve their temper when called to an account for such wanton aggressions.

Miss Plimpton's avoidance of her, wounded not the feelings of Constantia. In consequence of the communications made by this lady respecting Montagu and Laura, she had declined visiting a person whom she discovered to be so devoid of delicacy as to make connections of that kind a subject of conversation, although a brother had not been by such means held up as an object deserving of reprehension. The coldness of her manner at parting, and never returning Miss Plimpton's visit, was a convincing proof that on her side the acquaintance was broken off, an

affront not easily forgiven by a fair lady; and knowing the propensities of her who had been so slighted, Miss Neville was well assured, that, as a child of misfortune, she would not escape the lash of her tongue, so frequently exercised on those for whom she professed to entertain the liveliest affection and unalterable regard.

In returning to Clapton, Constantia's thoughts wandered but too often to the object who for some hours had strove to engross her attention. "Ah!" said she, in retiring to rest, "if my father were living, how much gratified should I be by the praises of De Eresby! he seems honest; but who can decide? Did not Rochford and Conolly appear equally amiable?" As she faintly articulated these words, she discerned that there was no sorrow or disappointment that had yet assailed her, which would affect her peace so much as a discovery that a gentleman so apparently deserv-

ing of her affection, should be seeking to inspire esteem and confidence only to prove himself a consummate hypocrite. "To-morrow," continued she, "I must investigate more minutely my own wishes and expectations; to-night I will not suffer anticipated evils to disturb my repose."

CHAP. XXV.

Without the smile from partial beauty won,
O! what were man? A world without a sun.

CAMPBELL'S PLEASURES OF HOPE.

ONCE more returned to her humble habitation, Constantia lost no time in beginning those works of ingenuity from the sale of which she hoped to derive some pecuniary advantages, while the exertions requisite for pursuing them would occupy her thoughts, and prevent the indulgence of fruitless retrospections.

The idea of De Eresby, however, would sometimes intrude; and, though doubtful as to the propriety of indulging a partiality, which, notwithstanding his personal attractions, and mental acquirements, would not have been excited but for the decided preference

which he had shewn for her company and conversation, she could not help regretting his absence, and feeling her curiosity awakened to learn to what cause this apparent neglect was to be imputed. Busily employed at her embroidery-frame, and fully resolved to banish from her thoughts all pretenders to her favour, as persons on whom a virtuous woman durst not bestow her affections, she was roused from reflections of this nature by the entrance of the very person who had been principally the subject of them. De Eresby, a little disconcerted by the constrained manner of Miss Neville, could scarcely recover himself sufficiently to explain, that on his return home from spending the evening in her company at Vauxhall, he found, waiting for his arrival, the servant of a particular friend, who had been sent express to town, to request his immediate attendance on his master. “On questioning the fellow,”

continued De Eresby, " I learnt that my friend had been thrown from his horse, and was in consequence much bruised, particularly his right hand, which, in his efforts to disengage himself from the bridle, had been dislocated at the wrist. I was in the confidence of this gentleman, and doubted not that he wished me to write letters for him, which he could not trust to a common amanuensis. Without hesitation, therefore, I ordered a chaise to convey me to his house, from which I returned only last night, and hope you will admit of this excuse for my not having earlier paid my respects here, to enquire whether you caught no cold at the gardens." Constantia, a little ashamed of her own want of consideration, and highly gratified by the earnestness with which De Eresby strove to acquit himself of intentional neglect, soon banished by her answers all appearance of restraint. Some of De Eresby's expressions the

last time he had conversed with her could not be recollected, while *tête à tête*, without exciting in the breast of Miss Neville sensations that were both painful and pleasurable.

When he ventured to take her hand, and to ask if his former temerity had been pardoned, and he might hope to hear from her own lips that an acknowledgment of an affection as sincere as it was ardent and disinterested, would not excite displeasure, the colour forsook her cheeks, an universal tremor seized her, and but for the support of her lover she must have fainted. Penetrated to the soul by observing this agitation, De Eresby, prompted by the excess of his emotions, intreated her to put an end to a suspense, the tortures of which he could not long endure. Ashamed of her weakness, Constantia faltered out, “ But for my present embarrassments, I should have no hesitation in declaring to you every senti-

ment which a contemplation of your worth has excited. Tell me how the poor may prove their sincerity, and my heart shall be laid open to your view?"

The joy which now dawned upon De Eresby was almost as difficult to be borne as the suspense of which he had complained. "Say, my beloved friend," replied he, "that you can bestow your undivided affections upon me, and every solicitude for the future will banish." "They are already yours, if,"—"Oh, do not cloud my happiness by suggestions of possible, though not probable ills; you have declared to me that you do not think me undeserving of your esteem and regard; trust me, my future conduct shall prove my gratitude, and justify your choice."

Re-assured by the respectful though affectionate tenderness of her lover, Constantia disclosed to him her intention to remain where she was, till there were some accounts of her bro-

ther's arrival Barbadoes, after which she should be able to decide on her future movements; trusting, in the meantime, that no desire for her society would make him forget that the frequent visits of a man of his appearance to her, while an inhabitant of West-place, might excite observation that would make her residence there very unpleasant. Coinciding with Miss Neville on most points, De Eresby only requested that she would consult him before she came to any resolution after hearing from her brother; as he flattered himself that, if he continued to retain her good opinion, she would then consent to share his fortunes, circumscribed as they were, rather than, by a separation, deprive him of the pleasure he experienced from being admitted to converse with her, and perhaps too, expose herself to encounter difficulties from which his protection might shield her. Not to fetter herself by engage-

ments, Constantia assured De Eresby, that she should take no step without previously communicating with him, as an interested friend, to whom she considered that she was henceforth responsible for every action of her life. Satisfied with the frankness, and more than ever convinced of the superiority of Miss Neville's intellectual endowments, De Eresby departed, not a little transported by the prospect of domestic happiness, which an union with such a woman would render certain. Constantia, more tranquil, was yet obliged to stem the tide of unrestrained affection, by giving vent to tears, such as she had not shed since her conviction of the baseness of man on discovering the designs of Rochford! Regretting not her loss of fortune, since by that means she had learned to distinguish *real* from *pretended* friends, she fervently implored of her Heavenly Father, wisdom to guide her through what re-

mained of her journey, and that if it were not His blessed will that she should become the wife of De Eresby, she might be inspired with fortitude to resign a hope which she now cherished as the solace of her life.

Pursuing her work with double diligence, Constantia soon completed what, with the assistance of her landlady, was disposed of at the sum she had asked for it; and it being considered by the purchaser as better executed than articles usually are that are offered for sale, the fair embroideress had sufficient encouragement to display her taste, and to proceed in executing what she designed.

Excepting a friendly visit from Mr. and Mrs. Orme, and a call from Mr. Lambton, her retirement was seldom invaded but by De Eresby, who sometimes ventured to spend an afternoon with his mistress, when, to avoid interrupting her avocations, he read

aloud some entertaining publication, the merits of which they discussed over their tea. When the weather was very inviting, the happy pair were induced to take an evening's ramble, but their walk was never extended to any length, and the gentleman always received his dismissal at the door. From motives of delicacy, De Eresby forbore to enquire of Constantia, why she laboured so hard, though he dreaded that her health would suffer from sitting so close at her needle. To relieve her for a time, he pressed her to pay a visit to Clapton; Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, he was certain, were a little offended by her absence; and as he sought not to conceal from them that he was admitted as a friend at West-place, it was the more likely, that in expressing their sentiments before him, it was with a view to their being communicated to her. Thanking him for his friendly intimation, Constantia determined on

going to St. Helen's the following day, at the hour that it was most likely she should meet Mr. Lambton there, who would take her down in his carriage to Clapton, as he had formerly done. Most heartily did she rejoice at having followed the advice of De Eresby, Mrs. Lambton shewing, by her reception of her guest, that she had thought her neglectful to friends, who had been anxious to promote her interest by every means in their power. In private, Miss Neville in a great measure accounted to Mrs. Lambton for her close confinement, which the latter no longer thought reprehensible, but considered her industrious efforts as highly to be praised.

On Constantia's enquiring after Ned Carleton, Mrs. Lambton related, that he had placed his sister in the house of a lady, celebrated for taking under her care the children of persons of distinction, who by the exorbitance of her

charges, rather than any persuasion of her fitness for becoming the preceptress of youth, had been induced to patronize her establishment. The brother, after settling this important point, had set out for the Continent, where he purposed to continue till he came of age; at which time he intended to dash off as a star of the first magnitude in the circles of fashion. When Mrs. Lambton added, that the young man had, previous to his departure from England, been presumptuous enough to address a beautiful, highly-accomplished, and amiable young woman, to whom Miss Neville had been introduced on her first visit to Clapton, it was with some difficulty that she could refrain from saying in pretty strong language, that those who sent the issue of such connections to Europe, were not aware of the evil consequences that might result to society from so doing. She contented herself, however, with applauding the

lady for her decided refusal, while she hoped that in her preference of the person who could excite attachment, she would be amply rewarded for not having been led to sacrifice her hopes of connubial happiness at the shrine of wealth.

* * * * *

Autumn had now begun to strip the trees of their leafy honours. Miss Neville still exercised her pencil, and wielded the steel bar, if not with great profit, at least to her own satisfaction. De Eresby, more devoted to her than ever, could not content himself with seeing her at stated intervals; though he was determined to adhere to her commands in not going oftener to the house where she dwelt, than she thought consistent with propriety; he could not, however, refrain from expressing to her on paper the sentiments with

which his generous heart was fraught. In tracing the characters of one so deserving of her esteem and love, Constantia was too happy to wish to prohibit an exercise of talent which, independently of the pleasure it afforded herself, was also a source of delight to the writer. Sometimes answers to such letters were required: faithful transcripts of her feelings, they were as devoid of studied embellishment as they were free from passionate exclamations. Her lover needed not protestations of inviolable attachment to convince him that he was the sole possessor of her heart; he was too well read in human nature not to know, that where the sincerest affection exists, there is the least desire to display that of which a single look assures us.

Thus secluded from the world did Constantia pass her peaceful hours: happy in her own reflections, and cheered by the consciousness of having neg-

lected no duty, but of having, to the best of her judgment, acted up to the precepts early instilled by her parents, she entertained few anxieties for the future, except what arose from the possibility that her brother's career of folly (for, as a sister, she wished to give it no harsher name) was not yet completed. An unexpected visitor disturbed this serenity. Eliza Mansell, who had never ceased to esteem Miss Neville, was at the time of the latter's precipitate departure from Hampstead on a tour with her family to the western counties. The uncle of Mr. Vanderdruzen, to whom Miss Eliza was then engaged, had lately withdrawn from active life to a seat that he had purchased in Dorsetshire, giving to his nephew such a share of his business as enabled him to think of settling for life. To please the old gentleman, the marriage of the young couple was celebrated under his roof; and, as a compliment to them,

he accompanied the whole party to Weymouth; a part of the plan which in some degree consoled Miss Mansell for the mortification she had endured in seeing her younger sister married before her. Business requiring the attendance of the bridegroom in town, the Mansell family accompanied his bride and him to their uncle's late residence in Broad-street, now ceded to the new-married pair, on condition that the old gentleman should make it his home when inclined to pay a visit to the capital. Miss Mansell, who lived but to please herself, remarked, that it was well for Mr. Vanderdrusen, senior, that she was not his nephew's wife instead of Eliza; for her part, she wondered how old people could expect that young ones could be troubled with them. Fortunately for the peace of the family into which Eliza had married, she had been no favourite of her mother; and she was also accustomed to

bear with the freaks and fancies of her sister, whose authority in the house was undisputed by any person but her father. Thus schooled into patience and forbearance, Mrs. Vanderdrusen was the less likely to expect from her husband a compliance with all her wishes. To have remonstrated against the admission of a person under her roof, to whose liberality and kindness her husband was indebted for the means of establishing himself respectably in life, would have been the height of ingratitude, to say not a word on the impolicy of the proceeding. Which of the two sisters was the most likely to ensure the esteem and respect of those with whom they might be connected, I leave to the judgment of my readers to determine, while I acquaint them, that Mrs. Vanderdrusen was the visitor whose unexpected appearance at West-place discomposed for a time the peace of Miss Neville.

After sincere congratulations on a late event from one party, and condolence from the other, while she rejoiced to see her friend look so well, Mrs. Vanderdruzen very plainly added, that she had disagreeable news to communicate, which she should not have undertaken to do, but at the express desire of her husband, who would have accompanied her himself, if he had not judged that a confidential conversation could be carried on with much more ease by two females, unrestrained by the presence of a male friend, though he should be the intimate of both.

“And now,” said Mrs. Vanderdruzen, “do not, my dear Miss Neville, imagine that I believe one word of what I am going to relate as the report of the day, though I think it is absolutely necessary that you should know it.”—“Pray proceed,” cried Constantia, “you terrify me beyond measure.”

“Well then, my dear, to relieve you

from suspence, and give you an opportunity of contradicting what no person who ever knew you can credit, Mr. Vanderdruzen and myself were told, that you had retired here to enjoy with more ease the society of a counsellor, a mere casual acquaintance, with whom you were frequently seen walking in the evening in this neighbourhood, and had accompanied him to several public places without any party; that when seen at Vauxhall hanging on his arm, you did not choose to be recognized by your acquaintance, to none of whom indeed had you given any intimation where you were to be found, all which circumstances were so suspicious, that it was believed the gentleman of the law, so favoured by your admission of his visits to the exclusion of others, contributed to your support."

The various emotions that rend the human frame were discoverable in the animated countenance of Constantia,

while she listened in mute astonishment to a censure of her conduct, in which truth was so blended with falshood, that she felt herself compelled to plead guilty to some part of the charge, as she proudly disdained the littleness of mind of the person or persons who had thus endeavoured to deprive her of *what enriched not them, but made her poor indeed*. Certain that she was conversing with an unprejudiced and sincere friend, Constantia scrupled not to say who the counsellor was, and by whom he had been introduced to her acquaintance. In stating her obligations to the elder De Eresby, she frankly asked Mrs. Vanderdruzen, if it were at all surprising that two persons, who had been in their youth so much distinguished by the notice of the same worthy character, should, on discovering that they had been so, feel as if a degree of affinity drew them towards each other. "That I have acted wisely I will not pretend

to affirm," continued Miss Neville, "but that my errors are those of the judgment, not of the intention, I can with truth declare. My future determinations shall convince those of my friends, whose good opinion I feel ambitious of preserving, that I can make any sacrifice consistent with honour that is required of me." Fully convinced of the malevolence of the party by whom such reports were propagated, Mrs. Vanderdrusen suggested, as the most effectual means to counteract them, Miss Neville's coming forward among her old connections. Saying this, she requested, with unaffected earnestness, that her friend would pass the winter as her guest; an invitation which she was authorized to give by her husband, whose resentment had been so awakened at hearing a character aspersed by one whose own faults required so much correction, that he could scarcely refrain from telling her

so, though in her father's house, and entertained at his table. " I thank Mr. Vanderdrusen for his generous concern," said Constantia, hastily; " but both of you must excuse my declining your friendly offer." The tears choked her utterance. Impenetrable as she had felt herself to the attacks of a malignant enemy, when receiving proofs of affection she became weak as a child. The image of De Eresby now rose to her view, and with his loved idea a thousand instances of regard, which she strove, but in vain, to banish from her remembrance. Perceiving the agitation of her mind, Mrs. Vanderdrusen rose to depart, expressing the strongest solicitude for the happiness of her friend, who she hoped would at last be rewarded according to her deserts, and prove to the world how superior she was to the unthinking many who now affected to sit in judgment upon her conduct.

Ruminating on the occurrences of the morning, and resolved to tear herself from scenes that reminded her of former tranquillity, to which she must now bid a long adieu, the following reflections involuntarily flowed from the lips of the traduced Constantia: "Alas! how seldom is it, that on our journey through this vale of tears we are permitted to meet with persons of dispositions congenial to our own, whose hearts beat in unison with ours, and whose sympathetic attentions mingle cordial drops with draughts the most nauseous! still more painful to sensibility is it, to be obliged to confess, what experience so often proves, that when we do believe ourselves to be possessed of such friends, *envy*, *jealousy*, and *malignity*, combine to deprive us of the advantages we might otherwise have derived from their protection and countenance.

“Thus it is, that man seeks to bereave others of the good which he values not himself; and so gross are the conceptions of many, who strive to efface the image of the Deity from the mind as well as from the countenance, by suffering the heart to be the receptacle of the most baleful passions, that they will glory in having successfully played on the feelings of others, who, with treble their portion of understanding, are the dupe of artifices of which the purity of their own thoughts had not permitted them to entertain a suspicion.” As the last word died away on her tongue, Constantia recollected that time was precious, and that the season for acting was not the fittest for moralizing on the imperfections of human nature. She, therefore, wrote a letter to her aunt Williamson, acquainting her, that her presence being no longer necessary in London, she intended setting

out in a few days for Chesterfield, where she hoped to find her in good health, and to have the power of convincing one so nearly related to her, that she was not insensible to kindness, or undeserving of esteem.

Fearful of meeting De Eresby, and that she would find it impossible to conceal from him her intended journey, Miss Neville began instantly to prepare for it, confiding the motives by which she was actuated to Mrs. Younger, on whose secrecy she had the most perfect reliance. To leave town without seeing Somers, she would have considered the height of ingratitude. Going first to Mr. Clark, to request his care of articles that could not well be removed to Derbyshire, and what his sister thought too valuable to remain in her possession, she reached Henrietta-street as her old friend was sitting down to dinner, who, drawing a chair for her, that she might partake of what

was before him, then congratulated her on the efficacy of the Surry air; for he had not seen her so blooming for some years. Constantia, sensible that the business which occupied her mind gave an unusual glow to her cheeks, said, that she certainly never was better in health, though now a little heated by her walk.

“Is that all,” replied Somers, “I could have assigned another cause for your roses. Pray when did you see Counsellor De Eresby?” Face and neck were now crimsoned, while to this interrogation Miss Neville could only answer by acknowledging, that she had not seen the person named for some days; though she must beg to know why he enquired?”

“Are you serious,” rejoined Somers, “in asking me such a question? Does not the gentleman neglect fulfilling some of the duties of his profession to enjoy your society? He will

lose considerably by not going the circuit, as he intended ; and his absence is imputed, with truth I believe, to his unwillingness to go so far from you."

Constantia now felt that what she had considered as unjust aspersions, were not wholly undeserved ; she, however, soon convinced Somers, that her intentions were pure, and that, to avoid drawing upon herself those expostulations which would naturally follow a communication of her design, she should quit London without seeing Mr. De Eresby ; that though it was necessary to write to him previous to her departure, she meant not to give her address, and as she had, fortunately, never spoken to him of her aunt Williamson, she hoped that he could not conjecture to what part of the country she might have retired. Under more auspicious circumstances, the acquaint-

tance may be renewed," continued Miss Neville ; " and if that period never arrives, I must bear the disappointment with the same fortitude that I have successfully exerted on other occasions."

While Somers applauded the resolution that dictated this measure, he failed not to pay a tribute of praise to the candour which impelled the lady to own to him, that she was not insensible to the merits of a gentleman whose friendship and regard would, in the eyes of all who knew him, have stamped a value on the possessor. He concluded, with hoping that the separation would be but temporary ; for he knew no person so worthy as the counsellor of Miss Neville's affection ; and 'twas a pity that false punctilio should so frequently stand in the way of happiness ; promising also to communicate what he might learn of her brother's

proceedings, whose silence was now a matter of surprise, Somers wished a good journey to his fair friend, who, on her return home, wrote the letter which will be found in the next chapter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

Tho' by the voice of Innocence and Virtue
 Absolv'd, we live not to ourselves alone :
 A rigorous world with peremptory sway
 Subjects us all, and even the noblest most.

THOMSON.

“ **E**RE you condemn my proceedings, De Eresby, hear a fair statement of my motives for concealing from you my intended journey till it was half performed, and I was beyond the reach of that persuasive eloquence, which, had I listened to, I well knew all my resolution could scarcely have enabled me to withstand.

“ You have assured me, that the strong predilection which you felt in my favour on our accidental meeting at Mr. Lambton's, every succeeding interview has increased. I was then contending with the severest of all afflic-

tions, that of being compelled to allow, that the only person on earth on whose protection I had a strong claim, and for whose benefit I had cheerfully sacrificed almost the whole of my property, had proved himself to be altogether unworthy of my esteem and regard, though, from our being children of the same parents, it was as much my duty, as it was my inclination, to preserve him from imputed censure, as far as was consistent with what I owed to their memory, and a due regard to my own reputation and interest.

“ Did you then discern in me any proneness to distrust the goodness of Providence towards man? any querulousness of disposition, or reluctance to sink into humble obscurity, if the falling fortunes of my family made such a step necessary? Surely you did not! Else I had not then been flattered by your approbation, and afterwards distinguished by your regard. Your professions of

friendship, I acknowledge to have received as a boon from Heaven, as the cordial drop that was to sweeten the bitter draught which the extravagance and selfishness of Montagu had compelled me to swallow. I even blest the hour in which, urged by dire necessity, and while suffering the tortures of suspense, I took my dreary walk to the house of Mr. Lambton ; and I congratulated myself on having had the courage, when there, to forget my sorrows, in order to enter the lists as an advocate of those doctrines, the efficacy of which I had so early ascertained. By contrasting my own prospects with those of the unhappy person I had in vain endeavoured to console, I felt in its full force the extent of my obligations to my parents, and that, while enjoying the blessing of health, I could ever (thanks to their goodness !) live independent by an exertion of my own powers, and by limiting my desires to

the means which I might possess for gratifying them

“ You know that my actions do not contradict my principles. Had I, however, continued within the vortex of your attractions, (for, alas ! my heart was but too susceptible of them) I know not how long I might have had the power of making this declaration. From frequent communication, we have become thoroughly sensible of each other's value. Common attachments may need the test of absence to prove their permanency ; but is it so with ours ? Oh, no ! my own heart tells me to what excess I am beloved, and how responsive are the throbs of yours, to those which at this moment rend every fibre of mine, and dart almost through my brain. Accuse me not, therefore, of inflicting pain which I do not feel.

“ I will not insult you, De Eresby, by desiring you to forget me ; but I require of you, as the surest pledge of

our re-union, under happier influences, to devote your time and attention to the duties of your profession, with a view to arriving at that eminence in it which may enable you to marry the woman of your choice, though she be portionless as I am, and have no powerful family interest to aid you in attaining to its honours.

“ Think how my feelings were probed, when I heard that your friendship for me had blighted the fairest prospects that ever dawned upon a young barrister; that when you should be studying the weightier matters of the law, you are composing epistles to me; and instead of filling your place on the circuit, and increasing your connections, by forming new and respectable acquaintance, you are devising expedients for passing your hours in my society. Highly as I have prized these visits, little did I imagine how much they would cost me.

“ I could sacrifice for you (now that my parents are no more), every worldly consideration ; yet I could not relinquish my native independence, or that fair fame, without which I should be no longer deserving of your affection ; for, with the consciousness of worth, would doubtless vanish that elevation of sentiment, and firmness in thinking and acting, which you have given me the credit of possessing. At your time of life, with your talents in the walk you have chosen, were I to continue to engross so large a portion of that time which is of such real value, I should be deemed the *ignis fatuus* that led you astray ; for, to one circumstanced as you are, fame is as precious a jewel, as is unblemished honour to the virtuous woman.

“ If I retard your progress to the goal, if I bar one avenue to preferment, I am, in truth, acting a most selfish part, and giving the world reason to

suppose that I am as little tenacious of my own reputation, as my conduct proves me to be regardless of your's. This is the language of sincerity, however harsh and dissonant it may appear.

“ My enemies have represented to *your* patron and *my* disinterested friend, Mr. Lambton, that I have sought by all manner of means to secure you to myself; that I have practised arts to inveigle you into a private marriage; and that I now derive support from your bounty. I hope and trust, that, notwithstanding I am bereaved of my fortune, while I have youth and health, and possess my faculties, it never may be credited, that the daughter of Robert and Louisa Neville was indebted to any source, save the product of her industry, or the exercise of her talents, for the means of subsistence !

“ In sickness, in the hour of distress, or of impending danger, in spite of all malignant reporters, be assured, my

best, my dearest friend, that to you my first application for assistance shall be made. We have looked forward with fervent hope to that auspicious day, when, in the face of men, we should plight that faith, for which neither of us, for our own sakes, would have demanded any other pledge than an interchange of hearts. This expectation may never be realized; but let us not, on that account, fail in the performance of our duty.

“ You, De Eresby, when you trace the events of your past life, ought silently to admire the inscrutable ways of Providence. That Being who inspired the savage breast with pity for your helpless infancy, who restored you to the comforts of civilized society, before you could have imbibed any noxious principles, or been trained to deeds of cruelty, who at that eventful period caused you to be led into the presence of our ever to be lamented friend, the

generous, the noble-minded De Eresby, has not placed you in a sphere of action for the purposes of self-gratification. Reflect on what is due to Mr. Lambton for his more than fatherly care. At eighteen, had you been let loose on the world, with your abilities, under the guidance of no other master than your passions, struggling too with poverty, after having had your feelings rendered more acute by a superior education, what a pest to society might you not have become?

“ I believe that our introduction to the acquaintance of each other, has been productive of mutual satisfaction; and it is with a view of securing it in future, that, for a time, I deprive myself of the pleasure I experience in your conversation and correspondence.

“ Do not imagine that I seek to fetter you with engagements. Should there be pointed out for your acceptance a wealthy bride, who is sensible

of your merits, and to whose superior pretensions you can voluntarily sacrifice my claims, dread not that I will ever disturb your felicity by asserting them ; but ah ! my friend, beware of making a “ *loveless joyless vow.*”

“ While I leave *you* free, I solemnly promise to take no decisive step until I have obtained your concurrence, to listen to no proposal of marriage while you are single, without instantly communicating with you on the subject, and soliciting your candid sentiments thereupon. With these assurances, rest satisfied ; though years should roll away, without conveying to you any tidings of the fugitive, whose wanderings are not to be traced, though it is probable you may one day be made acquainted with every one of them, not excepting even those of the imagination.

“ This address is a faithful transcript of my feelings. The composition, you

will believe, has cost me many tears. It is contradictory; so are my emotions. I have sought to calm them, and I have succeeded.

“ Father of Heaven! I submit to thy decrees. I yield up what, in my estimation, is dearer than all things but thy blessing; and I hope to meet, in return, with that “ peace which passeth all understanding.”

“ De Eresby, let the example of a weak timid woman, inspire thee with equal fortitude. Prove to her aspersors that Constantia has not willingly been the cause of drawing your attention from laudable pursuits; that, in associating with her, you were incited to the practice of virtue, and to cherish for your benefactor those sentiments of gratitude and respect, to which, from his great benevolence, he is so justly entitled.

“ Should we never meet on this side

eternity, believe that I am, and ever
will be, Your faithful, and

Affectionate friend,

“CONSTANTIA NEVILLE.”

This task completed, Constantia found herself in a great measure relieved from the weight which had hung upon her spirits. All preparations for her journey being now made, she resolved on passing the last day with Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, to the former of whom she intended to entrust her adieu to De Eresby. She accordingly threw herself into the first stage that she found not wholly occupied, and was soon led into conversation with a cheerful intelligent female about fifty, whose easy manners proclaimed her to be truly the gentlewoman. It has been before remarked, that Miss Neville had a promptitude to extract amusement, and gain information from every person whom chance threw in

her way. Having been so early accustomed to mixed society, she was easy of access to all, who, being themselves of a communicative turn, could discern in the expression of her countenance, that her mind was well stored, and that taciturnity was not one of her characteristics. Constantly acting up to her notions of rectitude and honour, when she had once taken a determination, however painful her reflections had previously been, no sooner was this mental warfare ended, than her mind recovered its former tone, nor could the most accurate observer have imagined that aught had occurred to repress her natural vivacity.

No sooner had the carriage got safely off the pavement, than conversation being rendered more pleasant, Constantia asked, how Dr. P—— was liked by his new congregation; and whether it was probable that H——y would prove to him an asylum?

The lady who had hitherto been the principal speaker, was silent; a younger one answered, that she understood his hearers were much pleased with his preaching, and that he was satisfied with their liberal treatment.

“ Well he may,” cried a ruddy-faced country-looking man, who sat opposite, “ an incendiary, a traitor, like him, to be fostered in a country which he meditated to ruin, he should be expelled the kingdom by an order of council.”

“ You forget, Sir,” said Constantia, who was hurt at his illiberality, “ that there have been no proofs brought forward of his really harbouring such an intention; every subject of Great Britain is considered innocent, till he is found guilty by a jury of his peers.”

“ That may be law,” says the violent stickler for government, “ but I’ll be hanged if it is justice; what, are we to wait till we have the knife at our own

throats, before we take any measures to rid the country of such vermin?"

"But surely, Sir," rejoined Constantia, "you will allow that the populace of Birmingham did not go the right way to work; the philosophical apparatus and the Doctor's manuscript works on Chymistry, could not have assisted in revolutionizing this country. For my own part, though I should not like his religious tenets to spread, nor do I conceive any man is warranted in propagating opinions that are subversive of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, I yet think the treatment he received at Birmingham, will ever be an indelible disgrace to the inhabitants, and throw odium on the country at large."

The young lady was now set down at her place of destination. Honest John Bull wrapt himself up in impenetrable silence; he neither relished the irony of the first part of Constantia's

speech,—was disposed to give her credit for the second, nor willing to agree with her in its conclusion. The lady, considering him as silenced, renewed the discourse, by asking Constantia whether she had ever read any of Dr. Priestley's works on divinity?

“No, madam,” she replied, “nor do I ever mean to dip into theological controversy; my faith is, I hope, too firmly fixed, to be unsettled by reading of any kind. The perusal of well-written tracts might, however, bewilder my imagination; and certainly, when I am inclined to study, there are books enow which will inform the mind and tend to purify the heart, without having recourse to disquisitions on points of faith.”

“But how, my dear young lady,” said the other, “would any truth be brought to light, if all had been of your way of thinking? The fathers of the church have fought their ground

inch by inch, besides, is it consistent with your apparent candour to condemn the propagation of tenets, with which you declare you are unacquainted?"

"Your pardon there, madam;" it is quite enough for me to know the meaning generally affixed to the word Unitarian. In denying the divinity of our Saviour, we deprive ourselves of our sheet-anchor; for we cannot imagine the sacrifice of a mere mortal could atone for the sins of a world."

How long this subject might have furnished food for argument it is impossible to ascertain, the stage at this moment stopping at Ward's Corner, where the passengers were to alight. John Bull walked away as quickly as he could. Constantia never having been set down on this spot before, asked the coachman the best foot-way to Clapton?

"I am going there," replied her

companion, " and will attend you thither."

" Forgive me," said Constantia (after chatting a little freely as they walked together) " for asking you, madam, if you are from the north."

" No farther than Lancashire, my dear ; but I believe you are from the other side of the Tweed ; not that I judge so from your accent, for your language I observe to be most correct, and without any marks of provincial dialect ; but from that spirit and resolution so evidently interwoven in your composition, and for which the natives of Scotland are generally remarked."

" You are mistaken, madam ; I am originally from a very warm climate, one of the Leeward Islands, Barbadoes ; a long residence in this country, and a train of misfortunes, have led me to consider myself almost a citizen of the

world, at least to form no particular attachment to a residence on any fixed spot. In a few days, however, I shall be very near your country."

"In what part, my dear?"—"Chesterfield, in Derbyshire."—"Are you acquainted there?"

"Yes, I am."

"Perhaps you know the widow of the rector, to whom I am going to pay a visit?"

"I have seen the lady; I have, however, a valuable and much esteemed friend in Chesterfield, whom you will, doubtless, meet at Mrs. Williamson's, I mean Dr. Gordon. His professional skill and universal benevolence have made him generally respected; I am sure he will soon discover that your acquaintance is worth cultivating; I sometimes correspond with him, and therefore shall hear whether you have attracted his notice."

At this moment they arrived at Mr.

Lambton's door; which being opened, and the servant waiting to give her admittance, Constantia was, sore against her inclination, obliged to break off the conversation. As the lady turned away, she said, "when you see Doctor Gordon, be sure to present Mrs. P~~reston~~'s compliments."

Constantia's astonishment bereft her of the powers of speech; "and is that really the wife of Dr. P~~reston~~?" said she aloud. The servant answered that it was; and that his house was in Lower Clapton; so that she had come considerably out of her way. "How stupid was I not to tell her my name, and to thank her for her politeness," thought Constantia; "she has, however, too much good sense not to impute the omission to the surprize which overwhelmed me at hearing her name, after what had been said in the stage-coach respecting her husband."

Mrs. Lambton received Miss Ne-

ville with her usual warmth ; which at once convinced her that, however Mr. Lambton might have disapproved of her intimacy with De Eresby, he had not sought to influence any other person, when it appeared that his wife was unapprized of her having excited his displeasure. The incidents of the stage-coach served to entertain Mrs. Lambton till Mr. Lambton's entrance from the garden (where he had employed the whole morning, as was his custom when in the country,) drew Constantia to reflect on the purpose for which she had come to Clapton. The good-natured shake of the hand which Mr. Lambton gave his fair client, while he asked her what made her such a stranger, inspired her with confidence to request a private audience ; which being granted,

“ And pray, my dear,” said Mr. Lambton, “ what is the important business that you have to communicate ?

Are you going to consult me on marriage-settlements? for your West India business must, you know, stand over till we have answers to our letters."

" Ah, Sir !" returned Constantia, " what have I to settle? I have no views of the kind."

" Then let me tell you, young lady, jesting a-part, that I am glad you have given me this opportunity of conferring with you. The world is very censorious; and when a young woman, with any pretensions to beauty and elegance, happens to be convicted of having a larger portion of good sense, and more *agrémens* than falls to her share, and is also known to have a decided preference for a young man worthy of her regard, who has distinguished her above all other women, if it be not prudent for them to marry, their being frequently seen together will lead to animadversions that are not creditable to either party."

Constantia, affected beyond measure by this pointed censure of her conduct, though delivered with such delicacy and kindness, assured Mr. Lambton of her ready acquiescence in the justice of his remarks; but that her present business was to inform him of her intended removal to Chesterfield, having been invited by her aunt to pass some months with her, which mode of arrangement was the best that could at present be devised; as, though she had a ready sale for the product of her pencil and needle, through the exertions of her worthy landlady, she feared that sitting so much as she did, would in the end be prejudicial to her health; and in a country where she was a stranger, it would be less hurtful to her feelings to go into company while her prospects were so uncertain, than it could be in London, or its neighbourhood, where, if she were recognized by former acquaintance, she

would be exposed to the pity and condolence of many whom, in spite of her fallen fortune, she considered as her inferiors.

“ I hope, my dear Miss Neville,” said Mr. Lambton, with increased interest, “ it was not for mere subsistence that you have laboured thus hard.”

“ Indeed, Sir, it was ; how else could I have supported myself ? You know that the amount of the sale of the furniture went to pay some private debts, and others contracted by me for house-keeping, when none of the tradespeople would have given credit to my brother’s name. I should be very unwilling to part with any of the few relicks belonging to my father and mother, which I have preserved from the general wreck ; and as to borrowing money, on what pretext could I have asked a loan, when I have no prospect of being able to repay it ?”

“ Does De Eresby know that it was by such means you lived ?”

“ I had no concealments from that gentleman, Sir ; he has sometimes read a new publication to me, while I embroidered a flower ; nor did I find my work proceed more heavily while my mind was amused. He, however, knows nothing of my present determinations ; and I hope, though I leave you my particular address, that you will have the goodness to conceal from him the place of my residence.”

“ So, so ; there has been some difference between you, I perceive ; and you have most heroically resolved on punishing the young man for his misdemeanor, by depriving him of your society. Beware, lest you drive him to take the lover’s leap.”

The ironical tone with which Mr. Lambton had now spoken, completely subdued the proud spirit of Constan-

tia, who could only answer with her tears. To enter upon an explanation or defence of her conduct, she found herself unequal. Taking, therefore, the letter addressed to De Eresby out of her pocket, while she calmly tore off the envelope, before Mr. Lambton had framed any apology for having probed her feelings too deeply, she asked if he would take time to peruse that letter, which she had meant to entrust to his care sealed, but the contents of which she now judged it expedient to communicate to him: in the meantime she would take a turn in the air, in order to tranquillize her spirits. Leading her with great tenderness to the garden-door, he promised, as soon as he had complied with her desire, to join her in the green-house.

Left to her own meditations, how much did the distressed and humbled Constantia rejoice at the openness of her proceedings! Had she finally re-

solved on confiding to the care of Mrs. Younger the letter which would now explain to Mr. Lambton the nature of her sentiments for her lover, and the greatness of the sacrifice she was about to make to public opinion, he might have conceived it was composed for the purpose, though communicated to him in consequence of this conversation. This she trusted he could not now surmise. The certainty that some person must have set a watch on the motions of De Eresby and herself, in order to weaken Mr. Lambton's opinion of both, now took full possession of her thoughts. She recollected, that every time she had taken a walk with him to enjoy the benefit of the free air, after a confinement to sedentary employments for some days, they had always encountered the notice of some person to whom she was known, and many who recognized him as their acquaintance. The party to Vauxhall

had been proposed by Mr. Lambton himself, nor could she have avoided joining it without incurring his displeasure. De Eresby, it has been before observed, was invested with the care of her by Mrs. Lambton ; and as on a crowded night a company, while joining in the promenade of the gardens are seldom together, she doubted not that her ancient enemy, Miss Plimpton, who was there, and not so well appointed with a beau, had made her remarks on the appearance of De Eresby, as her intimate acquaintance ; and, mortified to find that the embarrassments of which she had heard, did not prevent the proud West-Indian (as she had often styled Miss Neville,) from moving in as genteel a circle as formerly, though apparently a new one ; she had, doubtless, with her accustomed diligence, sought to learn who her party were, and how it was that she contrived to support her usual

genteel appearance. A lady who had called when she was out, under the pretence of having been recommended by Mr. Clark, to view her pieces of work and drawings, without purchasing any, Constantia, for the first time, imagined had been commissioned by Miss Plimpton; for she recollected, that by Mrs. Younger's account, the enquiries of this lady respecting her future plans, were far more minute than good breeding warranted in a stranger. Her failing to keep her promise in calling to see *La Piedmontese*, when finished, which she expressed a strong desire to purchase, was a convincing proof that the visit had been paid from no other motive, excepting the gratification of a curiosity as disgraceful to herself as it was insulting to the person who was deemed of sufficient importance to excite it.

It will be readily imagined, that when Mr. Lambton joined Constantia

in the green-house, whatever sentiments he had entertained to her prejudice were now wholly banished. " I see, my dear girl," said he, returning her letter, " that you need no advice from me, nor any one else. Follow the dictates of your own judgment, and you will do right. It is a bitter pill that you have prepared for De Eresby, though I trust its effects may be salutary. I shall keep a watch on his conduct; and if I find he is swerving from his allegiance to you, I shall give due notice at Chesterfield, that you may smile upon the country squires and others who may be subdued by your charms."

Thus restored to the confidence of her kind friend, Constantia felt no desire to search into the causes that had concurred to deprive her of it; she should soon be out of the reach of Miss Plimpton's observations; to be certain, therefore, that it was she who had

endeavoured to injure her, could afford no satisfaction. Whoever it was, had been an evil instrument to do good; as she was fully convinced, that without this attack on her peace of mind, she would never have thought of accepting the invitation of her aunt, partly, because she relished the tranquillity of her present mode of life, and partly, because she thought, if Mrs. Williamson had been much interested in her happiness, she would have used more affectionate language.

Having settled all points relative to business, sealed her letter, and delivered it to Mr. Lambton, who was not to give it to Mr. De Eresby till she had left London. Constantia took a friendly dinner with her assured friends, and her leave of Mrs. Lambton, without hinting at the intended journey, her husband having promised to make the necessary explanations. The Clapton-stage took her up at the

door, into one corner of which she shrunk from observation; nor did she open her lips till, when set down in Bishopsgate-street, it became necessary for her to wish her fellow-travellers good evening. When arrived at her lodgings, she found that De Eresby had called in the afternoon, and was disappointed at not seeing her, though sincerely glad to hear from Mrs. Younger that she was gone to Clapton. This meeting avoided, it appeared highly probable to Constantia, that she should get safely off, before her lover could find leisure to seek another. She had no pecuniary transactions to settle with any person but her landlady, to whom, however, she was seldom much in debt; for when she disposed of her pieces, she always requested her to deduct the rent of her apartment, as well as what might be due for trifles which she purchased for her use.

Every necessary arrangement having been made, Constantia, attended by Mrs. Younger, in a hackney-coach, with her baggage, drove into Holborn, about six o'clock in a pleasant morning, in the latter end of October; where, without entering the inn, she stepped into the Derby post-coach, that having been pointed out to her by Somers as an eligible mode of conveyance. That our Heroine felt some small palpitation at the heart when she passed the entrance to **Lincoln's-Inn-Fields**, is not to be denied; nor did she omit intreating Mrs. Younger to present her kindest regards to De Eresby if he should call, informing him, that from Mr. Lambton he would gain every necessary information. She had previously explained the necessity for concealing the place of her destination; and she knew the integrity of Mrs. Younger's heart too well to doubt, for a moment, her fidelity to the trust reposed in her.

CHAP. XXVII.

Virtuous and wise he was, but not severe,
He still remember'd that he once was young;
His easy presence check'd no decent joy.

ARMSTRONG.

THE promptitude with which Constantia had yielded to an imperious necessity, had scarcely allowed her time to consider what kind of reception she should meet with from her aunt, or whether the short notice she had given of her coming might not indicate that her motions were as little regulated by propriety, and a sense of justice, as her brother's had been. Left to meditate on the future, the suggestions of hope gave place to a train of gloomy reflections, awakened by recollecting, that, though on the road to a sister of her mother's, that

sister had not, in her recollection, proved herself such in affection, the partiality to Montagu being the only instance that her conduct had afforded of her being possessed of any tenderness for objects beyond the pale of her own family circle. The coach stopping at St. Alban's for the company to breakfast, roused our young friend, who, on entering the parlour of the inn, and observing that she was the youngest of the party, sat down with great good humour to the tea-table. An elderly gentleman, who had eyed her with some attention as he rode opposite to her in the coach, thanked her for her politeness; while the female who had been seated next her, said, "I hopes, Miss, you makes good tea; for I am very particler; I never drinks any but the best Hyson." Constantia, whose knowledge of stage-coach companions had been confined to her rides to and from Hampstead, or other villages at

no greater distance from London, felt a little disconcerted by this doubt of her ability for the post which she had voluntarily undertaken to fill. She, therefore, begged leave to resign it; observing, that the tea-cannister contained only Congou of no very superior quality; consequently, however excellently it might be infused and poured out, the liquid would be unpalatable to one accustomed to the flavour of fine green.”—“Sit still, young lady,” said the gentleman; “black tea is the most wholesome beverage of the two; and travellers do not expect to find the comforts of their own fire-sides at every stage.” The lady muttered to herself what no one could understand; and after having buttered part of the French roll that was on the plate before her, she tasted it, but without swallowing a morsel, got up and rung the bell with great violence. The waiter appearing, “Pray,” said she, “have you no better

butter? *this here* is only fit to grease cart-wheels." On his answering in the negative, she returned, " this it is, not taking my poor dear husband's advice, he wanted me to bring a basket with me, in which I could have put a roll of our own Epping; well, I must have some ham, for I can't relish dry bread." The man flew off to execute her commands, when the gentleman observed to Constantia, that he never wished to have a better tea-maker; and he hoped she did not regret the loss of the Epping butter. For his part, he thought, that what they were partaking of was very good.

" Hunger may be the sauce to which I am indebted for the relish with which I eat what is set before me," said Constantia in reply; " but I own I can find no fault with any thing; I wish our poor country-men and country-women in the prisons of France had such a breakfast to-day; the black bread

on which they are compelled to support nature, is not only nauseous to the taste, but extremely pernicious to the constitution."

"You speak wisely," said the gentleman, "but untravelled English people know not the real inconveniences of life, until they have endured the extremity of want."

A smart spruce young man now entered the room, begging pardon for the intrusion; but he thought he would just ask his fellow-travellers how they did before they step into the coach, which was now drawing up to the door. The good lady, who was a poulterer's wife in Honey-lane Market, had contrived to eat no small quantity of the butter, notwithstanding its inferiority to her own Epping. The truth was, that she found neither of her fellow-travellers disposed to call for "something relishing," and she knew no better expedient for getting the

ham joined in the general account, than by declaring her dislike of the butter.

The elderly gentleman had been originally bred to the Church; but not getting preferment after many years of fruitless expectation, had thrown by his gown, and accepted of an offer from a nobleman to accompany his two sons to Lausanne in Switzerland, where his lordship meant them to have their education finished under his (Mr. Cooper's) superintendence. When the engagement was completed, the earl settled a handsome annuity on the tutor, who had fitted his sons for becoming ornaments to society; nor were the young men (as is frequently the case) insensible of the obligations their preceptor had conferred. Fond of study, and now assured of what he considered a liberal provision, Mr. Cooper retired from the bustle of public life to his native town of Litchfield,

so celebrated for the luminaries which it has sent forth to enlighten and entertain mankind. His journey to town had been undertaken with a view of negotiating with the London booksellers for the sale of a work that had cost him an infinity of labour, and which, after various corrections and emendations, he now considered as in a fit state to be presented to the public. The business that had induced him to leave home having been accomplished to his satisfaction, he was returning thither, and felt not a little pleased at this accidental meeting with a young person whose conversation and general deportment were so much to his taste.

The last comer was a rider to a wholesale warehouse in the city, who, to ape the consequence assumed by gentlemen-travellers, had left London the night before in a returned chaise, in the hope that his real occupation might

not be conjectured from taking his seat two stages from London.

On returning to the coach, Mr. Cooper and Constantia entered into a kind of conversation so far above the comprehension of Mr. Dawson, that, in spite of his usual assurance, he was obliged to remain silent. Mrs. Gosling, quite fatigued with hearing others, began to talk to Mr. Dawson about the luck they were all in to have such a fine day so late in the year. "For my part," added she, "I am going no farther than Harborough; so I shall soon take my leave." She left the sentence unfinished, though it was easy to discern that the sound of "company I don't like," died away upon her tongue. A pause in the discourse carried on by Mr. Cooper and Miss Neville induced the young man to ask the latter if she had seen New Drury, and what she thought of its appearance? "I have not been at either of the theatres

since they were opened," was the reply to this question.

" Well ! now you quite surprise me, Miss," continued Dawson; " why I would not have missed seeing the first performance on the opening of the new house for a great deal; if I had been in the country, I would have come to town on purpose; and so you have really come away without seeing it? I should have thought, Miss, you had more curiosity."

" This lady," said Mr. Cooper, " may have been with friends who were not fond of theatrical amusements; and I am sure she has too much good sense to repine at what was not attainable, though you, Sir, are striving to convince her that she ought to return, rather than go among her country-friends unacquainted with what every body should know."

This again silenced the beau of Lawrence-lane, who thought the old gentle-

man was determined to keep the young lady to himself; so he took out the last night's General Evening Post to pass the time; for, to commune with his own thoughts was the last thing he was likely to do.

The clean, neat, well-paved town of Northampton, drew forth a tribute of praise from Constantia. Finding that, for those who did not require refreshment, there would be time enough for a slight survey of the place, Mr. Cooper offered to be Miss Neville's escorte; which being readily accepted, the gentleman took that opportunity of enquiring how far his fellow-traveller was going. On her informing him, that Chesterfield was the place of her destination, he said he had some business at Derby; and, though he had not intended to go there so soon when he left town, he should not quit her till he saw her under proper care to Chesterfield. " My reason for guard-

ing you with such vigilance," continued Mr. Cooper, "is, that I do not like the pertness of that young man. The woman, though vulgar in the extreme, is a kind of protection; but you have heard her say how soon she is to quit the coach; I am confident that our would-be wit, whose place of abode, if I mistake not, is within the sound of Bow-bell, would be very familiar; and you know that great part of the journey will be performed at night. We may, indeed, get another passenger at Harborough; but if we do, the party may not benefit by the addition." Constantia, while she thanked Mr. Cooper for his considerate kindness, told him her name, and that of her aunt whom she was going to visit. "I hope," said Mr. Cooper, with some earnestness, "you are not dependent upon your aunt, Mrs. Williamson; I have never seen her since she was a widow; but as a wife, I

know she ruled with the most despotic sway; and, I have been told, still acknowledges no superior, excepting her son, who might have turned out a clever fellow, but for her excessive indulgence." Constantia, with a sigh, said, "that all she should require from her aunt would be kind treatment for the few months she intended to remain under her roof; as by that time her own plans would be arranged, and none of them pointed to a constant residence at Chesterfield." Mr. Cooper had communicated his name and place of residence, with a hope of meeting during the winter; when the coachman calling to them to quicken their pace, prevented Miss Neville from saying more, than that such a renewal of acquaintance would afford her sincere pleasure.

Mr. Dawson now affected to be jocose, and to talk of the pleasant walk Mrs. Gosling and himself had had;

though they were not so rude as to part from their company, they were left in the lurch, nobody could tell for what. A silence ensuing, he exclaimed, as if a sudden thought had struck him, "Miss, can you sing a duet."—"I do not sing, sir," replied Constantia. "Oh," said Mr. Dawson, "that excuse won't do, for I am sure by your voice you can sing, and you have a singing face too." "I beg," said Mr. Cooper, rather angrily, "that the lady may not be pressed to do what is not agreeable to her wishes." "The young lady seems to be able to answer for herself," muttered Dawson, "but some folks are disposed to be a little crusty." Mrs. Gosling now interfered, and begged that Mr. Dawson would sing a duet himself, for she was *wastly* fond of music. "Pray," says he, "how can I do that, unless you will sing either first or second?" "Oh," rejoined the retailer of chickens, "I did not know as how it

took two people to sing duets. My Caroline learnt to sing and play at school; and I am sure she has nobody to take first or second, she does it all herself; but she is a clever girl, tho' I say it that am her mother."

Mr. Dawson, to display his knowledge, undertook to convince Mrs. Gosling of the difference between quartettes, trios, duets, and solos, giving specimens of the different compositions, as he went along, convincing even Mr. Cooper and Miss Neville, of the compass of his voice, the correctness of his ear, and his taste as a vocal performer. Mrs. Gosling, by this time quite familiar with her neighbour, whose countenance from the first of his entering the parlour at St. Albans, seemed that of an acquaintance, asked him if he did not frequently walk down Honey-lane, Cheapside? She supposed he belonged to the band of musicianers that held a concert at the Paul's Head,

Cateaton-street. In a moment the dignity of the rider of one of the first Manchester houses in Laurence-lane, or its vicinity, took fire. "Madam," said he, "I'd have you to know I'm a gentleman performer; my company is courted by the first men in the city of London, when they give entertainments; and, 'tis a disputed point whether Incledon or I sing best; but I think he has it in strength of voice, though I am his superior in the plaintive style of singing." To prove that his excellence was not over-rated, Dawson sung a stanza of a simple ballad in so pathetic a style, as to melt Constantia into tears. "And this man" (thought she) "with all his vulgarity and conceit, has the power to excite the softer emotions, while the vacuity of his countenance is but too faithful an index of the uncultivated mind and vulgar soul which resides within. He is asked to public dinners, as in ancient times the Fool of the court

was brought forward to contribute to the amusement of the guests; and he cannot discern, that those who give him these invitations, are induced to do so, from being influenced by the same desire, that of giving entertainment, which is not to be had for money."

Mrs. Gosling, making a proper apology, was reinstated in the good graces of the gentleman musicianer, as she called Mr. Dawson, who, inflated by the praises which his melodious strains had extorted even from Miss Neville, at last tired his hearers by the continued exertions of his voice; and had not the stopping of the coach for the party to dine, relieved them from its effects, even Mrs. Gosling would have petitioned for a little peace and quiet.

To the no small satisfaction of Mr. Cooper and Miss Neville, they soon dismissed their fellow-passengers, nor did any thing worthy of note occur till their arrival at Derby, when who should

be standing in the inn-yard, enquiring if his chaise and horses were ready to go to Chesterfield, but the worthy physician named by Mrs. Priestley. Mr. Cooper shook hands with his old friend, rejoicing at the rencontre, and telling him that he meant to press him into the service of the fair; for there was a young lady bound for Chesterfield, whom, though not on the sick list, he should recommend to his care. "Mrs. Williamson's niece, I presume," said Dr. Gordon. "Yes; but how came you to know this so well?" "Because Mrs. Williamson knowing I was coming to Derby, stopped my carriage as I was passing her door, and desired me to enquire for Miss Neville here. If you had not arrived to-day, madam," said the good Doctor bowing, as he spoke to Constantia, "your aunt would have sent her own carriage to-morrow, in the hope of its being serviceable to you."

While the party took their tea together, Constantia related her accidental meeting with Mrs. Puristly, adding, that by her she was prepared to find a friend in Doctor Gordon; and she considered being ushered into Chesterfield by him, as a most auspicious omen: probably she might deduce from it, that Fortune was now tired of persecuting her, and intended to reward her for the slippery tricks which she had been in the habit of playing her and her family for some years.

Mr. Cooper, at parting from his fair fellow-traveller, bestowed on her many commendations and thanks for her efforts to amuse him, she received them as the genuine effusions of a philanthropic mind, whose sympathy she was proud of having excited. "Do not speak much of me to your aunt," whispered the worthy man to Constantia, as he led her down stairs; "she will

recollect her having insulted my poverty; and though I pardoned her at the time, the person guilty of injustice can seldom believe that the aggrieved party is sincere in their forgiveness. God bless you! and remember my place of residence is Litchfield." At these words the chaise-door was closed, and Constantia could only reply by an inclination of the head, her heart being too full to admit of giving utterance to words.

Doctor Gordon soon drew her into conversation, by giving his testimony of the worth and transcendent abilities of his friend, whose evening of life was now unclouded by the melancholy which had marked its meridian. "Perhaps," continued he, "my friend did not mention that he had been a curate of your late uncle's. He was then married to an amiable woman, whom, with several children, he had the heart-felt grief to follow to the grave. Disgusted

with the spot, where he had encountered so much affliction, and mortified at finding all his hopes of preferment repeatedly blighted, his mental powers, but for the friendship of a lady who introduced him to the Earl of B——, and his compliance with that nobleman's request to take the care of his sons to the Continent, would soon have been enfeebled; nor do I think his constitution would have been long able to repel the inroads of that enemy who had bereaved him of so many blessings. The change of scene, and the mild climate of Switzerland, added to the literary friendships he formed there, renovated both systems. Still he dreads coming to Chesterfield, though he sometimes does, when after passing the day with me, at night he visits the tombs of those so much loved while on earth, on which he drops the tear of calm resignation, looking forward to a re-union in those blissful regions, for the enjoyment

of which the uniform tenor of his past life has abundantly prepared him."

"And this," thought Constantia, "is the man whom my aunt dared to insult! How shall I be able to pay her that respect, which, from my peculiar circumstances, she will be inclined to demand in a two-fold degree. Doctor Gordon strove to cheer the spirits of his companion, who he saw laboured under considerable depression. Knowing that there is nothing so likely to enable us to bear the rubs of this life, as the bringing forward to the view objects whose superior distresses make our own appear light and trivial, he related, that he had been that day attending the funeral of an amiable young woman, a Nun, lately escaped from France, who he was confident had fallen a victim to her solicitude for those of her family, who were now enduring all the horrors of one of the cruelest warfares that ever disgraced humanity.

“ An elderly lady,” continued the Doctor, “ who had professed, I believe, late in life, and was induced to do so from disappointments and a wish to shun society; took this young sister under her protection, and brought her to England, where at five-and-twenty she has paid the debt required from all who draw the breath of life. At present contending with illness, the survivor is the most to be pitied; for in a strange country, without a friend to soothe her sorrows, the affectionate tenderness of a sister in affliction must have been an alleviation of distress, and the want of it will doubtless be most deeply felt.”

Constantia's tears flowed copiously. “ I hope, Sir,” said she, as soon as the excess of her emotions would permit her “ that the lady is not also without funds to support herself?”

“ I rather am inclined to think her wealthy,” replied the Doctor; “ for

she has requested me to enquire if there are any poor emigrants in want of assistance in this part of the country; to whom she authorized me to administer relief, without naming her as the source from whence the bounty flowed."

"Perhaps I may not again have the same opportunity of tendering my services," rejoined Constantia; "therefore let me intreat you to say to the distressed stranger, that I have been accustomed to the confinement of a sick chamber, and will, with pleasure, accompany you any morning to enquire after her health. I may perform some little offices that will cheer the gloom which at present must surround her. My aunt can never be displeased with me for passing my hours with one whose peculiar situation must excite the commiseration of all who have hearts to feel."

"I trust she will not," answered the

Doctor: " the proposal does honour to your feelings as a Christian. My friend Cooper told me, when you left us together, that your mind had the right bias; and could not express what he would have given to be possessed of such a daughter. I will not tell you what more he said, lest I should put you to the blush; but you may be sure of a niche in my next letter to my valuable correspondent Mrs. P~~er~~ville. I shall call on you to-morrow; we are now near your aunt's door; excuse my alighting, for I must hasten to my patient, the suffering sister of St. Ursula, to whom I shall not fail to deliver your message."

On Constantia's entering her aunt's house, the palpitation of her heart was so excessive, that it was with much difficulty she supported herself to the dining-room, where Mrs. Williamson waited to receive her. The stately air and cold manners of the lady, did not

tend to dispel the apprehensions of her niece ; who, however, begged to be excused for her inability, from fatigue, to thank her aunt as she ought, for her goodness in desiring Doctor Gordon to enquire for her at Derby ; and added, that under his protection she had come to Chesterfield.

“ I wonder the Doctor did not come in,” replied Mrs. Williamson.

“ I am remiss in not making his apology,” said Constantia ; “ he was under the necessity of attending a lady, who, I understand, is here a total stranger, and I doubt not, is much indebted to the humanity as well as skill of her physician.”

“ Pray how came you so well acquainted with the merits of Doctor Gordon ?” said Mrs. Williamson, in a tone of surprize.

“ His character I have often heard extolled by those who knew him intimately,” rejoined Miss Neville ; “ and

I assure you, madam, I felt quite happy in meeting him at Derby."

The conversation that ensued would prove wholly uninteresting if detailed; suffice it to say, that, but for her having felt no common degree of satisfaction in the society of Mr. Cooper, and the prospect of conciliating the regard of Doctor Gordon, she would almost have repented her journey.

Mrs. Williamson could not forget that the cause of her sister's estrangement from her, was their differing on the mode of bringing up the person now under her roof; and she was mortified to see in her niece the natural ease which bespoke the gentlewoman, combined with a delicacy of thinking and propriety of conduct, which seemed to have been the offspring of innate rectitude, rather than communicated by the common modes of instruction: The next day she made a minute enquiry into the accomplishments of Miss

Neville; and when she found music not among the number, attempted not to conceal her displeasure.

“ I thought,” said she, “ your education would not be properly attended to at home. If your mother had followed my advice, you might have been a proficient in an art, without which no young person can now make any figure in polite companies.”

Constantia, if she durst, would here have given scope to a vein for ridicule, by describing the pretensions on which Mr. Dawson founded his claims to approbation, and procured admission to the houses of the opulent. Checking this propensity to declare, that in some instances the most insignificant of men and women were gifted with musical talents; though the acquisition of them was not, for that reason, to be neglected, she simply stated, that having no particular taste for music, and being devoid of vocal powers, her father and

mother had thought instructions in that art superfluous ; her own observations since, she added, tended to convince her, that the time which must have been necessarily devoted to practising on an instrument, would have prevented her from cultivating other talents, which had proved sources of amusement in solitary hours, many of which it had been her lot to pass since the departure of her mother for the West Indies.

Mrs. Williamson still lamented that Miss Neville had been suffered to have her own way in so material a point ; she was certain she might have played as well as many who amused their friends ; she must own it was a grievous disappointment to her, for all the young ladies who came to make any stay with her, endeavoured to make themselves agreeable. Her son was as fond of music as herself ; when he returned from Cambridge, his cousin would

judge whether she had not cause to be proud of him: his playing on the flute and violin was charming.

Miss Neville found herself not a little piqued at this early and open declaration of her being deficient in the requisites for an agreeable companion at Chesterfield. Still endeavouring to preserve her equanimity of temper, she expressed her regret at not having made the attempt at an earlier period of her life. Had either of her parents, she said, expressed a desire for her enlivening them by her strains, it would have been a stimulus to exertion; but that not being the case, her sincere opinion was, that the proficiency attainable by a person contending against both nature and inclination, would not have been worth the sacrificing so invaluable a thing as time had ever appeared to be in her eyes.

The entrance of Doctor Gordon relieved Constantia from a conversation

that had become truly painful. She asked, as soon as opportunity offered, after the health of the sister of St. Ursula, and was rejoiced to hear that she was considerably better. Mrs. Williamson's permission being granted, though in rather an ungracious manner, for Constantia's paying the promised visit, the Doctor said he would call the next day to attend her; by that time, he added, his patient would be more able to enter into conversation than she was at present, and he was convinced that the accents of kindness would be more efficacious towards restoring her health, than all the prescriptions of the *materia medica*.

Mrs. Williamson was so accustomed to rule all her household, that she felt her consequence not a little lowered, by her niece having proposed to visit the sick stranger, without first consulting her on the subject. Surprised to find her as independent in mind, as if

possessed of a fortune equal to her own, she congratulated herself on the foresight she had displayed in giving so slight an invitation, till a closer acquaintance proved whether their dispositions were congenial. It had never been a favourite occupation with Mrs. Williamson to attend the sick, and the long confinement to which she had been obliged to submit, during the illness of her husband, and which terminated in releasing him from the infirmities of old age, had not in any degree reconciled her to performing the office of nurse. Her unfeeling conduct to Mr. Cooper's family, while contending with disease, was the origin of that disgust which ended in the worthy man's retiring from officiating as curate to her husband. Though Doctor Gordon had spoken frequently of the distressed situation of the two fugitives, it did not enter Mrs. Williamson's mind that she might have the

power of alleviating their sorrows. Her niece, offering to make the attempt, was consequently doubly affronting; as it implied a tacit disapprobation of her own indifference, which she now began to think must also have displeased Doctor Gordon. Vexed at the interest which that gentleman already seemed to take in her niece, she found herself compelled to be civil, and to keep a guard on her expressions, lest they might be reported to her disadvantage. So far Miss Neville was already indebted to her amiable qualities for commanding the respect of those who could not themselves appreciate her worth.

Leaving the Chesterfield party for a time, we must take a view of what may have occurred among our friends in the capital, since the departure of Constantia from West Place.

CHAP. XXVIII.

There is in love a power, there is a soft divinity that draws transport even from distress; that gives the heart a certain pang, excelling far the joys of gross unfeeling life.

THOMSON.

EAGER to see Constantia after her visit to Clapton, De Eresby bent his course to West Place the evening of the day on which she had set off for Derbyshire.

Astonished by the communications of Mrs. Younger, and her resolute denial of any knowledge as to the cause of her lodger's removal, or whither she was gone, the only hope to which he clung for an elucidation of the mystery, was, her reference to Mr. Lambton. Tortured by a thousand fears, he returned immediately to town, and driv-

ing, as fast as a pair of hackney horses would permit, from Westminster Bridge to Bishopsgate-street, he soon found himself at St. Helen's. Luckily, as he thought, Mr. Dornford was at home and disengaged; but to him the departure of Miss Neville was as unexpected a piece of news as it had been to the enquirer. To go down to Clapton at so late an hour, was impossible; for though travelling the whole night would have been preferable to enduring the torments of suspense, De Eresby was fully aware of the respect due to Mr. and Mrs. Lambton, and that at this moment, it was more than ever requisite for him to avoid giving them cause of offence.

Constantia unfaithful, or governed by caprice, he could not suffer himself for a moment to believe; yet had she not in this instance acted in direct opposition to her own declarations, that of taking no step without previously

consulting him on its expediency? She had also voluntarily said, that to him she considered herself responsible for every act of her life ; how was this reconcileable with her present secrecy? But for the intimation that Mr. Lambton was apprized of her intentions, the gloomy images created by fancy would have suspended the faculty of thinking.

As he paced up and down the parlour of Mr. Dornford, the latter clearly discerned the workings of his mind. Though before sensible that Miss Neville had excited no ordinary portion of the esteem of De Eresby, he had not till now considered him so strongly attached to her. The discovery made him anxiously solicitous to promote the happiness of persons who seemed so worthy of each other. The placidity of Mr. Dornford's temper fitted him for becoming a counsellor to one whose passions seemed to have o'er-

leaped the bounds of reason. Restored to some degree of composure, De Eresby sought to apologize for his former warmth; and endeavoured to pass a few hours in Mr. Dornford's society, that he might the longer escape from the pressure of his own reflections.

Arrived at his chambers, his thoughts took another direction. He was there assailed by apprehensions for the safety of one so deservedly dear, and who from too refined a delicacy, he feared, was probably then exposing herself to encounter difficulties, from which his presence might have shielded her. He then accused himself of indifference, in not returning to West Place the evening before, as he had once intended, had he not been prevented by business, which he now considered unimportant. Thus at war with himself, De Eresby retired to rest; but sleep visited not his eye-lids. When the hour admitted of his going to St. Helen's he received

from Mr. Lambton, who had that moment alighted from his carriage, the packet which he fondly hoped would end his sufferings. Renovated by the sight of the well-known characters, he durst not trust himself to trace them in the presence of another; and, striving to appear at ease to Mr. Lambton, he put the letter carelessly in his pocket, talking to him of the occurrences of the day. He was at length relieved by the entrance of Mr. Dornford, who told him, as he went out of the office, that their private room above stairs was vacant, and at his service. De Eresby most gratefully accepted of his friend's obliging offer; and with haste and trepidation broke the seal, which he considered a passport to delayed joy. Struck with dismay at the first sentence, how were the alternate emotions of love, anger, tenderness, admiration, and despair, depicted in the animated countenance of De Eresby, as he pe-

rused what to him seemed the destruction of his hopes.

Finding it impossible to converse with either of his friends, he rushed out of the house, and by an irresistible impulse, got into a coach, ordering the driver to proceed to West Place. Mrs. Younger sympathized so sincerely with De Eresby, on witnessing his agitation, and listening to his complaints of the cruelty of Miss Neville, that some part of her caution forsook her. She declared that the sufferings of the lady on the separation, were in no degree inferior to his, and that she believed Constantia could not have executed her designs had she given herself time for consideration. Softened by this intelligence, De Eresby again perused the fatal letter, and was delighted to find that the impassioned tenderness of his mistress soothed his soul to peace. "She loves!" he exclaimed, "and scruples not to say, that she cannot in-

sult me by desiring me to forget her. When I do banish her loved idea, this pulse must cease to beat, or this eye must glare in imbecility or madness! Yes, I will obey her injunctions! I will not waste my prime in inaction! I will shew that I am worthy of the affection of my *Constancia*!"

These exclamations found their way to the heart of Mrs. Younger, who voluntarily promised that, should she by any means hear of Miss Neville, she would communicate the intelligence to Mr. De Eresby; she was sure, she said, they would yet be happily united, and she believed few were to be met with, who deserved so much the good opinion of the world, as the lady whose absence was now a source of regret; that was the very reason, she observed, why so many malicious persons were striving to *peck* at her, but she hoped to live to see them punished for their wick-

edness. This tribute of praise to the worth of his mistress, given in the simplicity of the good woman's heart, was truly gratifying to the feelings of De Eresby, who took his way to Lincoln's-Inn, in a happier frame of mind than he could have expected when he left the city.

Still fearful of discussing a subject on which he felt it impossible to reason calmly, De Eresby determined not to speak of Miss Neville to Mr. Lambton, unless her name was first introduced by that gentleman. Relying on her assurances, he was in a great measure reconciled to the secrecy which had at first wounded him so deeply; and certain that he would never have consented to her leaving town, but have urged an immediate union, as the surest means of securing her to himself, and silencing the tongue of scandal, he became more convinced that Constantia's plan was the most prudent and

judicious. But as to “ years rolling on” without his hearing of or from her, that was a possibility which did not appear to him at all likely to be realized. Hope therefore was again an inmate of his bosom.

Constantia, meanwhile, recovered from the fatigue she had undergone, was now most anxiously desirous of gaining some intelligence of her lover. His astonishment at her departure she had frequently pourtrayed, in colours though faint when compared to the reality, yet vivid enough to chase away peace from her bosom, if it had not been cherished as an inmate from the consciousness of performing her duty. The desire of dispensing good to others had on many occasions blunted the asperity of her own afflictions, and now this active principle was not without its beneficial effects. This she experienced from the moment of her entering the chamber where sorrow

seemed to hold her court, and she soon had the inexpressible satisfaction of perceiving that the attempt to banish her influence was likely to prove successful.

Worn down with complicated distress, and averse to exertion, from seeing no object to excite sympathy, or to inspire a hope for life, there was yet in the countenance of the sister of St. Ursula, an expression that at the first glance awakened respect and affection. She received her visitor as if already disposed to take her to her bosom; nor could Constantia account for the emotions which pervaded her own, while admitted to converse with her. To give the ladies an opportunity of becoming better acquainted, Dr. Gordon left them together, after expressing a wish that his fair assistant would soon make his visits, except as a friend, wholly unnecessary.

The stranger's speaking English as

her native tongue, surprised as much as it delighted Constantia ; who now began to hope, that the impulse which led her to seek to pour the oil of consolation on the wounds of the stricken wanderer, would be the means of communicating joy to some persons nearer home, who might be lamenting a lost relation entombed in the prisons of France.

“ The untimely death of sister Marie,” said the stranger to her new friend, “ affected my nerves more than all I had sustained in escaping from France. Till lately, I had no idea she was in danger. Youth is nipped in the bud, while the sapless trunk of age is suffered to linger a little longer. I will hope it is for a good purpose ; you have promised to come again to-morrow, I shall then dispel your surprise at my fluency in English ; for I am not a native, and it is more than thirty years since I last saw this island. My hus-

band was my protector to and from it. I was then several years younger than you are now ; judge if the recollection of lost enjoyments did not augment the real ills with which I have been surrounded."

The endearing expressions of Constantia, and the earnestness with which she strove to mitigate sorrows that she allowed only the lenient hand of time could heal, made the deepest impression on the mind of the person to whom her kindness was directed. On her return to her aunt, she was overpowered by a torrent of questions, which she owned herself utterly unable to answer; her motive in paying the visit not having been to gratify curiosity, but simply to succour a fellow-creature, who appeared to stand in need of consolation. " Is she not a nun and a catholic?" asked Mrs. Williamson. " Your religion and her's are so different, that were you not so young, that must in-

capacitate you from becoming her comforter."

"We do not differ in essentials," returned Constantia; "we look to the same fountain of mercy for forgiveness of our transgressions, and we acknowledge one intercessor, by whose merits and sacrifice we hope to attain eternal life."

"What, I suppose you do not know that the catholics think none can be saved out of the pales of their own church?" rejoined Mrs. Williamson, with a tone of asperity, "and that they piously consign us to eternal torments without a sigh of regret?"

"I hope and trust," said Constantia, with some warmth, "that there are few catholics who profess such tenets, and if they ever have been so illiberal, that the reception of their distressed brethren in a protestant country, which has opened its arms to succour all that fled to it for shelter, will dispel these

prejudices. We shall at least convince them that our practice is good, if our faith be erroneous."

Mrs. Williamson was silenced, but not without being convinced that her niece was in danger of being converted to popery, if she continued to cultivate the friendship and acquaintance of nuns; she saw, however, that Miss Neville was too determined in most points to be influenced by her reasoning, and therefore wisely resolved to let her take her own way; and if that ended as she presumed it would do, no blame could be imputed to her, as she was not consulted in the mode of her bringing up; but on the contrary, the plan suggested by her for that purpose, had been decisively condemned by her sister.

Unwilling to make an enemy of her only female relation, Constantia took no small pains to select some subject on which she might converse with her

aunt to their mutual satisfaction. When she had in some degree succeeded, she produced her drawings and embroidery, in the hope, she said, that her aunt would find some of her performances worth acceptance, or that, if unsuccessful in suiting her taste by the works already completed, she requested to be favoured with her ideas, which she would endeavour to execute in her best manner. Surprised at Constantia's condescension, Mrs. Williamson observed, that she must be very difficult to please, indeed, if she could not make a selection from what was before her; the perplexity of choice lay in the variety and excellence of the several pieces; she should be quite proud, she added, to shew any of them as the production of one so nearly related to her. To end this amicable contest, the artist herself selected the most valuable and best finished of her collection, which she presented to her aunt, replacing what

remained in the port-folio, whence she had drawn them. Rejoicing at the effect of her endeavour to conciliate the favour of one to whom she was at present much indebted, Constantia retired to rest with a much more approving mind than she had done the preceding night, for she then feared she had spoken too freely sentiments that it was evident did not accord with those cherished by her aunt, who might receive in consequence of her freedom, impressions not easily to be effaced. This, however, could not restrain her when the catholics and their bigotry were the subject of discourse; her natural disposition would then display itself in spite of the suggestions of prudence; she therefore resolved that her future behaviour should be more regulated by its dictates.

Mrs. Williamson started no farther objections to Miss Neville's visiting the Nun, particularly as she hoped to be

amused with her marvellous adventures, from the intimation Constantia had received from her, that at the next interview she would relate her history. The second visit not requiring the introduction of Doctor Gordon, Miss Neville repaired at an early hour, to enquire after the health of her new acquaintance, for whom she felt no common interest. Sister Terese (that was the Nun's appellation) was so much recovered, that her nurse declared that she wanted company to keep up her spirits, much more than medicine. The conversation began to take the turn which would have led to confidential communication, had not the entrance of Doctor Gordon obliged both the ladies to give their attention to him. His asking Constantia by the name of Neville, after the health of her aunt, appeared to excite in the stranger no small portion of curiosity, in which a faint gleam of joy seemed to be blended.

It is proper to be observed, that the physician, when he proposed bringing a young lady to see his patient, only said that she was the niece of the clergyman's widow, and anxious to render any service to a sick stranger that her ability would permit.

As soon as sister Terese could give vent to words, which appeared struggling for utterance, she asked with evident agitation, what were the Christian names of Miss Neville's parents? "Robert and Louisa," said Constantia, while she rose to offer assistance that seemed absolutely necessary to prevent the Nun from falling off her chair. "Almighty Providence!" exclaimed the latter, while she threw her arms round the neck of Constantia, "it is thy work! Oh teach me never more to repine at thy decrees!" Constantia trembled and wept, as she with ardour returned the affectionate embrace of the stranger, and though she

most anxiously desired an explanation, was yet fearful of requiring one, as the stranger, by the excess of her emotions, seemed incapable of giving it. At last the silence rendered awful by its length, was broken, and Constantia was told, to her astonishment and joy, that the sister of St. Ursula, was her mother's early friend, Mrs. Hayman of Ham-burgh. The good Doctor Gordon, who had been the means of bringing two persons together, who from past events had such strong claims on the affections of each other, felt little less delighted than the parties themselves.

When Constantia remembered the accumulation of sorrows, which, from her mother's report, Mrs. Hayman had endured, she regarded her own misfortunes (excepting the loss of her parents) as too trivial to be called such. In relating to Mrs. Hayman the incidents of her own life, she touched but slightly on her love for De Eresby,

though the apparent delight with which she dwelt on his talents and virtues, and her commendations of his generous open conduct, convinced Mrs. Hayman that her heart was deeply interested in the object of her praise; concluding very justly, that want of fortune alone impeded their union, she believed she might have the power of removing that difficulty; and in thus contributing to the enjoyments of others, she hoped to find the peace and serenity which she had in vain sought within the confines of a cloister. Avoiding to communicate what had befallen herself since the death of her husband, Mrs. Hayman promised to arrange some papers, containing the history of her life, which she had composed at various periods, and which she would soon present to Constantia for perusal.

That her long absence might not offend her aunt, Constantia begged permission of Mrs. Hayman to leave

her for a few hours, though she doubted not that she would be able to return after dinner, and that Mrs. Williamson on hearing who the Nun proved to be, would unite with herself in endeavouring to render her residence in Chesterfield as agreeable as circumstances would permit.

The sanguine disposition of Miss Neville now augured every good from a journey, which she had undertaken with apprehensions of its having a different result. When conscious that there was no alternative, but to marry De Eresby immediately, or to place herself where her actions were controulable by another, she had yielded up inclination to duty: Her motives for doing so were pure and disinterested; and the reward promised to those who sacrifice present enjoyment, when the retaining of it is inconsistent with honour, was not long withheld. Mrs. Hayman's maternal embrace and

offered friendship were in themselves a recompence for all her sufferings from the malignity of her enemies. Such were Constantia's reflections previous to entering the apartment of her aunt, who had retired to dress for dinner, after having received at least half the belles and beaus of Chesterfield, who had come to pay their compliments to the stranger, and had gone away not a little disappointed at the object of their visit being defeated.

The intelligence communicated to Mrs. Williamson by her niece, soon drew the attention of the former from all subjects but that of regretting her own failure of attention to a lady of Mrs. Hayman's consequence; an omission for which she said she could never forgive herself, though she hoped to have the power of repairing her fault, and that her niece would make every necessary apology for the past. Constantia, though by no means desirous

of impressing Mrs. Hayman with an unfavourable opinion of so near a relation, felt that she would be at a loss to frame any excuse, when none could be urged with truth but want of inclination to succour persons in distress who were unknown, and who professed a faith supposed to be particularly hostile to that of the person from whom assistance was required. "My aunt," thought Constantia, "was not aware that in doing so she was falling into the very error which she reprobated in another. Thus do we see verified, that it is much easier to discern the mote in our brother's eye than to pluck the beam out of our own." Miss Neville was now as much urged by her aunt to pay attention to the Nun as she had before been cautioned against it. The more Mrs. Hayman saw of the amiable disposition of her newly-found friend, the more interested she became in her happiness.

Doctor Gordon, with whom all who were admitted to his friendship could converse with perfect freedom, did not scruple to give such hints of Mrs. Williamson's temper and disposition, as fully convinced Mrs. Hayman that she was a very unfit protectress for one possessing Constantia's independence of mind. The Doctor, between jest and earnest, had also communicated the fears of the aunt, lest her niece, from too great intimacy with catholics, might be prevailed on to change her religion. In acquitting one lady of entertaining such designs, and ridiculing the fears of the other in the instance of her niece, whose superior understanding and strength of mind made her little liable to attacks on the score of religion, he disclosed to Mrs. Hayman some of the practices of the emigrant priests, who, by seeking to make proselytes of the children of the parents by whom they were so kindly

and hospitably entertained, reflected no great honour either on their own heads or hearts. “ In short,” continued Doctor Gordon, “ as I know I am speaking to a woman of genuine piety and liberality, I must say, that though I think toleration the very basis of Christianity, I much fear that the British Government will have cause to repent their great beneficence towards a body of people, who are seeking to disseminate doctrines, which, if generally received, must endanger the peace of these kingdoms. Make us believe that we are only returning to the religion of our forefathers, and what are we to think of the Protestant succession? Sentiments to this effect I have heard boldly avowed by men who are deriving incomes from teaching the French language in various families in England, and who also have gone so far as to say, that they doubt not the period is at no great distance when

the British Isles will be received into the bosom of the true catholic church. On the ductile mind of youth what impressions may not be made, by persons whose zeal so far outstrips every consideration that ought to be dear to man?" Mrs. Hayman lamented, in terms suitable to the occasion, that men, calling themselves the servants of God, should conceive they were performing the work of their divine Master, in thus seeking to sow the seeds of discord in private families; which must be the case where children were taught to believe, that the religion of their parents was insufficient, and led not to eternal life.

The change wrought on Mrs. Hayman in the space of a few weeks, was visible even to herself. Hitherto she had declined seeing Mrs. Williamson, from her inability to receive strangers; though the truth was, that she wished that lady to be fully apprized of her

own intentions in regard to Miss Neville previous to their meeting. To facilitate this desirable object, she completed her narrative, which she presented to the latter, requesting that those parts relating to the sense she entertained of her kindness, and her earnest desire that she should become to her as an adopted daughter, should be communicated to Mrs. Williamson, merely as a repetition of proposals formerly made, an early acceptance of which would afford her the sincerest pleasure. To say that Constantia had a due sense of Mrs. Hayman's kindness would be to give a very inadequate idea of the tide of gratitude which swelled for utterance. How did her heart yearn to communicate her good fortune to De Eresby, for without his participating in her joys, she felt they were incomplete.

CHAP. XXIX.

How chances mock and changes fill the cup of
alteration
With divers liquors ! O, if this were seen,
The happiest youth, viewing his progress through ;
What perils past, what crosses to ensue,
Wou'd shut the book, and sit him down and die.

SHAKESPEARE.

HISTORY OF MRS. HAYMAN.

TO you, my dear young friend, whose
sympathetic attentions have calmed
my soul to peace, whose affectionate
assiduities have taught me that there
was still a being on earth whom I
could love, and that an indifference to
the preservation of life was criminal in
the sight of that blessed Lord, to whose
service I have been so long dedicated ;
to you my dear, my beloved Constan-

tia, do I open the inmost recesses of my soul.

You have proved yourself to be the Good Samaritan; I had but just escaped from thieves, my wounds were deep and grievous, but you have poured into them the oil of consolation; Gilead's balm could not have been more efficacious than thy soothing accents. When I contemplated your animated countenance, I experienced a gleam of satisfaction to which I had long been a stranger; "surely," thought I, "that face is known to me; there is an expression in those features which bears a striking analogy to the glance of some person, whom, in happier times, has been an object of my regard. It was owing to this surmise that I so readily admitted of your services. When the discovery was made, your gentle spirit recoiled at witnessing the agonies which shook my frame. With the image of Louisa Carleton and

Robert Neville returned a thousand heart-rending recollections; faint shadows of joys, some of which I wilfully and most impiously had deprived myself of for ever. A mother! surely I was not intended to be honoured with that name! Had I never heard the helpless cries of my infant, had he never received nourishment from my breast, Oh then I should have been guiltless! I might have looked forward with joy to the hour when my spirit should be clothed with immortality; when I should be called to that blissful country, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest!

Left an orphan at ten years old, I was at that age placed by my guardian in a convent in Brabant, the Superior of which was a distant relation of my own family.

Here I was instructed in those female accomplishments which may truly be deemed ornamental ones; when

disposed to be idle, I was readily excused the performance of my task, for I had only to plead indisposition, and I was suffered to remain in my chamber without any person enquiring how I employed myself. Being considered as an heiress, and having more money at my command than any other boarder, I acquired a degree of superiority among my young companions to which neither my talents or attainments would otherwise have entitled me. The hope of prevailing on me to renounce the world, and to endow the convent with my possessions, was, I believe, cherished by my relation from the moment of my being placed under her care. With this great end in view, she strove by every means in her power to make me satisfied with my place of residence ; forgetting that the indulgence of every inclination, was the most effectual means she could have taken to render me unfit for, encountering the

disappointments of more advanced life ; for whether on the theatre of the world, or within the walls of a monastery, we play our part, we are sure to have our tempers ruffled by the most trivial occurrences, if we have not in youth experienced some opposition to our wishes.

I was religious, if performing all the offices enjoined by our holy church could have made me so ; but of the active duties of a Christian I had formed no conception. All the young ladies but myself went out occasionally. I had no relations to send for me, nobody who appeared to be interested in my happiness without the precincts of the nunnery. There I was overpowered by kindness ; as the favour of the Lady Abbess was a passport to the good graces of all her dependents. The recollection of the servility of my instructors, when I was afterwards convinced how slender my claims to their appro-

bation must have been, has often made me nauseate praise, when possibly those who awarded it were expressing what they really felt.

One day, when I had been more than usually successful in my music, I was told that a gentleman wanted to see me in the parlour. Accompanied by the Superior, I went to attend him, and soon recognized Mr. Lichstein, under whose protection I was placed after the death of my father. This good man shed tears of joy when he saw me, and expressed so much delight at my improved appearance, that my good cousin could not refrain from displaying some of my acquisitions. I was desired to play and sing, which I did in my best manner, having selected the song that I had been practising when summoned to the parlour. Mr. Lichstein was lavish in his encomiums. "My wife," said he, "will be rejoiced to see you look so well, and to find

you such a proficient in an art to which she is so partial. Do you know, madam," he added, turning to the Lady Abbess, "that I am come to rob you of your little favourite for a few weeks? What say you, my dear, will you go with me to Brussels? for there I have left Mrs. Lichstein, who was unable to proceed farther."

This direct attack upon her authority, was nowise pleasing to the Superior. Mr. Lichstein being my guardian, and the person who had delivered me to her care, she knew not how to resist; particularly in my presence, as she had always laboured to persuade me that I was under no restraint, and might quit the convent whenever I pleased. She desired me to get ready some changes of linen, and when she had conversed with my guardian, I should be sent for. "Be sure to bring your music-books," he cried, as I made my obedience, and flew rather

than ran to tell my companions I was going to Brussels.

The expectation of returning in less than a month, prevented my feeling any of those regrets which press so forcibly on the heart, when we imagine we are beholding any place for the last time, although it may only be consecrated by recollection of the sorrows we endured while an inhabitant of it. There is something so truly awful in the words, "Adieu, for ever!" that all, except the most callous, must be subdued while pronouncing them.

It is unnecessary to repeat the cautions of the Lady Abbess to my guardian, that I might not injure my health by keeping late hours, or partaking too freely of public amusements. "I trust, Sir," said she, when she gave me into his hands, "that you will restore your ward to me with the same amiable dispositions and affectionate heart that she now possesses. I know not, in-

deed, how I shall bear her absence, so necessary has she made herself to my happiness, by her prompt obedience and sweetness of temper." I kissed her hand with assurances of eternal gratitude, and that I hoped I should always be as much disposed to comply with her wishes as I had hitherto been.

The novelty of riding in a carriage, and the variety of objects that attracted my notice, soon made me forget to weep. I was anxious to appear sensible of the kindness of Mr. Lichstein; I therefore entered into conversation with him, which soon drew a veil from before my eyes, that made me sick of myself, and of every person to whom I had been accustomed to pay the most profound respect and unlimited obedience. In the conversation Mr. Lichstein informed me of the following particulars.

The other gentleman who had been

nominated by my father as joint executor to his estate, and guardian to my person and fortune, was of the catholic persuasion, and nearly related to the lady from whom I had just parted. Mr. Lichstein and his family were Lutherans; my father who had been bred a catholic, and wished me not to depart from the religion of his fathers, had, however, in the strongest terms reprobated the sacrifices he daily heard were made by parents of their younger daughters to cloisters, in order to aggrandize the elder branches of their families. Fearing that an attempt to bias my inclinations might be successful from my inexperience, and knowing that my wealth would make me a desirable acquisition to any religious society, he had requested Mr. Lichstein to take me from the convent, where I might be placed, before I was seventeen years old, and to keep me in society till I was of an age to judge

for myself; which period he limited to the day on which I entered my twenty-fourth year.

Fully confident of the integrity of the man to whom he confided this wish, he had, either from a fear of wounding the feelings of Mons. Deterville, or from neglect, omitted to insert this clause in the will, which constituted the two gentlemen my protectors, till the law would adjudge me to have arrived at years of discretion. Detained by business at a distance from my place of residence, Mr. Lichstein had not, for four years, been able to make a personal enquiry respecting me; but during that interval had desired several persons of his acquaintance, who were travelling through Brabant, to ask at the grate for permission to see me, to whom he gave credentials that could not be objected to by the Superior. From various pretexts, however, they all were denied access;

chiefly, as the Abbess said, because my health was so delicate, and my nerves so weak, that I could not bear the conversation of strangers.

“ Judge, my dear girl,” said Mr. Lichstein, “ of my anxiety to know the truth of this report, and of my surprise in perceiving you the picture of health; with such powers of voice too, as indicated a strength of nerves fit for encountering the fatigue of this journey, and afterwards of conversing with Mrs. Lichstein and myself on the propriety of emancipating you from the bondage in which you appear to have been held. Had I communicated my intention to the Lady Abbess, I am confident she would have opposed your removal; particularly when she knows that your other guardian, Mons. Deterville, on whom she has placed great dependence, is not expected to recover.”

The kindness of Mr. Lichstein I

felt most sensibly, nor did I experience any sorrow at my abrupt departure from the convent; except when I remembered that I had not bade an affectionate farewell to one of the sisterhood, to whom I was under the greatest obligations, and who, I now imagined, was prevented by a fear of incurring the displeasure of the Superior, from shewing me still stronger marks of attention.

The affectionate reception I met from the worthy Mrs. Lichstein, and the air of freedom which reigned through her house, made me feel so perfectly happy, that for a time even sister Agatha was forgotten.

The death of Mons. Deterville leaving Mr. Lichstein my sole guardian, he lost no time in acquainting the Lady Abbess that my future residence would be in his house, and requesting that my musical instruments, baggage, &c. should be immediately transmitted to

Brussels, as his stay in that place might not be of long continuance. That lady, wisely judging that opposition would be vain, complied with his orders, at the same time expressing her surprise at receiving them, and hoping soon to have a visit from her dearly beloved pupil.

Two years did I pass under the care of Mr. and Mrs. Lichstein, who, had they been my own parents, could not have treated me with greater kindness. At the end of the last Mr. Lichstein communicated to me proposals of marriage from two gentlemen; both of them protestants, and engaged in commerce. In point of character and situation in life, he assured me they were equally unexceptionable. Mr. Hayman's exterior was more prepossessing than Mr. Schneider's, neither did I like him the worse for being of the same country with my father, for though by birth a Fleming, I had a

strong predilection for the natives of England, as well as a desire to visit that country, believing that I should be recognized by some of my relations.

In truth, I entered into my matrimonial engagements with very little reflection. The ceremony was performed at Ypres by a protestant clergyman, and afterwards at Ostend by a catholic priest. From the last place I embarked for England with my husband, in a packet-boat, accompanied by Mr. and Mrs. Lichstein, we landed at Margate, whence we proceeded to London, where the whole party proposed remaining some weeks.

The dissipation I was now plunged into, left little leisure for reflecting on the duties of a wife. Mr. Hayman's relations and friends were all emulous to pay us attention. Congratulatory visits and entertainments were so frequent, that they overpowered my

strength, I became so languid, and looked so ill, that Mr. Lichstein recommended medical advice, which Mr. Hayman instantly procured, and I was in consequence desired to move out of town, the thick atmosphere of the capital being deemed injurious to my health. In one of my excursions, I had passed part of a day at Chelsea, where I was much pleased with the view of the river, and the prospects of its banks. To that village I requested to go; the distance being so short, that our gentlemen would find no difficulty in joining us at a late hour to dinner.

Any inquiry respecting my paternal relations I found impracticable. They had resided at a distance in a northern county, and I knew no person to whom I could write, who might ascertain if any yet survived; I had also married into a family who were not a little tenacious of their own respectability; and

in bringing forward any of my connections not thoroughly known, I ran the risk of introducing to my husband persons whose acquaintance might be productive of uneasiness to myself, and disadvantageous to him. Thus reasoned Mrs. Lichstein, and so much good sense did I find in her counsel, that I resolved to adhere to it, though in doing so, I was compelled to relinquish the accomplishment of a favourite point, and even the chief gratification which my voyage to England had promised to procure me.

In separating from my worthy friends, who were under a necessity of returning to Ostend in two months from the time they left it, I indeed found that they had been more than a father and mother to me.

Mr. Hayman, to divert my attention, made several excursions within fifty miles of London. In one of those I paid a visit to Nettlebury, where I im-

bibed that partiality for your mother, which afterwards induced Mr. Hayman and I to send for her to Hamburgh. No man could take more pains to convince a woman that he had married her purely for affection, than did my husband. On my part, I never had an idea that I should have been happy as the wife of any other man, and my affection grew stronger as I believed his did. But yet, my dear young friend, I was too soon fully convinced, that it was my portion, and not myself, of which Mr. Hayman had coveted the possession.

On my arrival at Hamburgh I was overwhelmed with a profusion of civilities. You, my dear girl, who have not been on the continent of Europe, can form but a very imperfect idea of the style in which the merchants of that city entertain their friends. I was fearful of not acquitting myself at the head of Mr. Hayman's table to my own

satisfaction, and to the credit of his taste ; and if it had not been for our country retreats, which procured me some intervals of ease, I think I never could have sustained the state which I was compelled to keep up.

No sooner was I freed from the irksomeness of paying and receiving a round of visits, than I employed my first leisure in renewing my acquaintance with sister Agatha. There were seasons when I sighed for the calmness and quietude of the convent. I then pardoned the Lady Abbess for her desire to keep me in it, as I doubted not that she conceived in doing so, she would have proved herself my best friend. The letters of sister Agatha were truly consolatory. No bigotry, no denunciations of vengeance if I left the pale of the catholic church, no advice to endeavour to convert my husband to the true faith, was to be found in any part of them ; on the contrary,

she advised me to avoid the discussion of religious subjects, as far as related to forms, but to converse freely on the general duties of Christians, so as to convince him, to whom I was now responsible for my actions, that I considered the articles of our belief in all essential points to be the same; and though mine enjoined a confessor, which his did not, he might rest assured that no other person should divide with him that influence over my mind, to which, as to the possessor of my heart and affections, he was justly entitled.

Most dear to me were the admonitions of this admirable and truly pious woman. On many occasions have the perusal of her epistles calmed my restless passions, and made me welcome my husband with a serene open brow, when otherwise it might have been the seat of distrust and ill-humour. Never had I cause to complain of inattention or neglect from him. I was his wife;

one who had brought him an accession of wealth, and who was entitled, from the regularity of her conduct, and her irreproachable life, to his respect and regard ; but, alas ! I was not the object of *his* love, as he was of mine !

I was weak enough to imagine that, if I had brought him children, I should have been completely happy ; not that he ever expressed a desire for a family, but this I imputed to his fear of wounding my feelings, so prone are we to believe what we wish. That Mr. Hayman had any other attachment, I never had the least suspicion of, and often when I have been meditating alone, and regretting that I had not around me objects to fill that void in my heart, which my feelings taught me was necessary to my existence, I have wept bitterly, and lamented that I had not continued an inmate of Mr. Lichstein's family, instead of becoming a wife.

I had been near five years at Ham-
burgh, without forming an intimacy
with any lady in particular. At this
time I was besieged, I might say, by a
lively black-eyed widow, who, not-
withstanding all my efforts to the con-
trary, wormed herself so far into my
confidence as to discover, that if there
was one bitter ingredient mingled in
my cup, it arose from my not being
blessed with children. Having so far
gained her point, she tried to insinuate
that Mr. Hayman was not sufficiently
sensible of my value. This hint nearly
deprived her of the footing she had so
long laboured to obtain. Her presence
of mind, however, did not forsake her;
she extricated herself with so much
dexterity, as to make me believe I had
misunderstood her expressions. She
was so guarded, after perceiving how
tender a point it was to speak to me,
even in the slightest manner, of my

husband's failings, that I almost forgot she had made the attempt.

One day, when we were taking a morning's ride together, she requested that I would desire the coachman to drive to a cluster of small houses a little off the high road, where some young women lived who took in muslins to work, and fabricated other articles for the dress of their own sex. At the first house we stopped at, she asked for a piece of muslin which she had left the week before to be worked in rambour, and which, being now completed, reflected no small degree of credit on the workwoman. Finding myself a good deal amused with looking over this young person's performance, I was the more readily induced to enter into the other houses, as I was told I should find many works of ingenuity carried on in them, worthy of my notice and patronage. Nor did I think

my time ill bestowed; the peacefulness that seemed to reign in all the habitations, reminded me of that exemption from care and sorrow, which was my lot while engaged in similar pursuits.

At the door of the last house my attention was rivetted by the appearance of a lovely boy, apparently about seven years old. My companion spoke to him as an old acquaintance, nor was he deficient in recognizing her as one who had shewn him liberal marks of attention. There was an indescribable something in the expression of the sweet fellow's countenance, which immediately awakened an interest in me for him, and made me almost forget my errand thither. His grandmother, a respectable looking old lady, displayed the produce of her daughter's industry, regretting that she was herself from home, having gone to purchase materials for a piece of embroidery ordered

by a lady in Hamburgh, which, when finished, was to be sent to England.

I slipped a piece of gold into the hand of the little Adonis at parting. He was, however, too ingenuous to forbear shewing my gift to his grandmother, who, with a dignified look, mildly requested me to excuse her not suffering him to receive money from strangers, as she thought it might lead to great improprieties, and perhaps make him dislike those who did not cultivate his regard by the same means. I felt the full force of the reproof, took away my purchases, resolving to take the first opportunity of seeing the mother of the child; for such I judged the daughter to be, though William spoke of her as his aunt.

I thanked my lively companion for the entertainment of the morning, and was so simple as to add, "what would I give, could I call such a boy my son!" Madame *Dulay* was considerate enough

to leave me to my own meditations, after my having uttered this exclamation; a forbearance so inconsistent with her usual mode of behaviour, that I know not how she was able to have such a command of herself.

A week or two elapsed before an engagement of Mr. Hayman's to pass the day from home gave me an interval of leisure, which I could devote to Madame Dulay, and our ride to the fair embroideresses. In the interim, I had given orders to a workman in town to make me a handsome pair of gold buttons, which I intended to entreat the old lady would suffer her grandson to wear for my sake. We left our carriage at a little distance, as we had done before, and took my own servant with us; and he being out of livery, and ourselves in morning dresses, drew but little attention from the inhabitants of the houses. I could not resist making the best of my way to the one where

the interesting William dwelt. The old lady recognized us, and called Adelaide from an inner room, to wait upon the ladies, whom she had served in her absence the week before. With Adelaide came William, who immediately ran up to me, saying, "Aunt, this is the lady who was so good to me the day you were out." Much as I had been attracted by little William, I soon found all my faculties absorbed in contemplating the beautiful but dejected countenance of Adelaide. The timidity of her address, and the deep yet melodious tones of her voice, were peculiarly pleasing, though I saw that her downcast eye shrunk from the piercing glance of Madame Dulay.

I praised the delicacy of her work, but conversed most with her mother, as I perceived that her agitation increased rather than lessened, as our stay was prolonged; I took the buttons out of my pocket, and told William to ask per-

mission of his grand-mama to accept them for my sake. He ran to her with them, expressing his delight, and hoping also that aunt would not think them too pretty for him to wear. This present could not be rejected without running the risk of incurring my displeasure, or I am confident it would have shared the same fate as the piece of gold. Adelaide's eyes swam in tears, while she affected to admire what she hardly saw. William was now become familiar, and when I asked him if he would go in the coach with me, he half consented, till he recollected that unless I could take grand-mama and aunt along with me too, he could not promise; for as they were so good, he said, it would be cruel to leave them, and he was sure they would cry when he was gone. Fully convinced that my presence conveyed no pleasure to the person for whose sorrows, though unknown, I felt the sincerest sympathy,

I rose to depart, telling the child I loved him better for his refusal than if he had complied with my request; as had he been insensible to the kindness of his own relations, I could not have expected he would have been more grateful for mine.

No sooner were we seated in the coach, than Madame Dulay, her eyes sparkling with satisfaction, exclaimed, "Well, you have seen this Adelaide, what think you of her?"—"That she is one of the most lovely interesting young women I have ever seen; (I replied) though certainly labouring under some secret uneasiness. I should almost suspect her to be the mother of William, if the modest simplicity so legible in her fine features, did not convince me she was incapable of artifice; besides, what man could be base enough to desert such a woman? And unless the father of her child has been such a wretch, what could induce

her to conceal the claim of a parent?" "And yet," cried Madame Dulay, "such wretches are to be met with every day; and are not in the least degree incapacitated from holding the most respectable rank in society, by having been convicted of such baseness. I could name you half a dozen among your own acquaintance, who would glory in having the credit of an intrigue with such a woman as Adelaide."

There was a something of spite and malice in the expression of my companion's countenance, while she uttered these words, that made me at once suspect I had been her dupe. I preserved a rigorous silence during the remainder of our ride homeward, and inwardly determined to pay no more visits to Adelaide; regretting that I had seen her, as in spite of my efforts to the contrary, her image haunted me, and though I could fix no suspicion on any particular person, I was in perpetual dread that

my calls upon the work-women would be spoken of, and perhaps an indulgence of improper curiosity imputed as the cause which impelled me to go thither.

CHAP. XXX.

He has fallen in darkness, like a star, that shoots
across the desert, when the traveller is alone, and
mourns the transient beam.

OSSIAN.

CONTINUATION OF MRS. HAYMAN'S HISTORY.

FOILED as my artful friend Madame Dulay had been, on the day on which she accomplished one part of her schemes, she was too indefatigable in what she undertook, to give up her point, without making another effort.

She had not paid me a visit for a week, when one morning I received a billet, intimating that, if I were disengaged and alone, she intended to pass the day with me. Mr. Hayman having gone to the country the day before on

business, I had no pretext for declining her offer; though I meant to resist all proposals for taking an airing. I soon found she had intelligence to communicate, which she affected to consider as highly important.

“ Ah! my dear,” says she, “ little do you imagine how much we were deceived in Adelaide! I have discovered that she is at this moment supported by a married man, and that that man is—your husband.”

Surprise and indignation kept me for some moments silent. “ And who, madam,” said I, affecting a composure I wished to be real, “ do you propose to serve by this communication? Surely you cannot believe that I can consider you meant to promote my happiness, by seeking to lower my husband in my good opinion. If William be his son, the connection with his mother must have taken place before I knew that such a person as Mr. Hayman existed.

To her then he has been, on my account, unfaithful. The obscurity in which she appears to have lived, and the exertions which she makes to gain her livelihood by her own industry, do not indicate that vice has become familiar to her. I think it probable that she receives from Mr. Hayman an annual sum for the maintenance of her child; but that she admits of his visits I cannot so readily allow."

Madame Dulay affected to be extremely hurt that I should suspect her of being actuated by any motives, save the purest regard for myself. "She was sure," she said, "she had not a moment's peace since she had heard of my injuries; nor could she rest till she had seen me."

"I am sorry your zeal has so far outstripped your prudence, madam," continued I, with the most determined scorn and contempt I could assume; "I should suppose, when you were a

married woman, you did not conceive that those who held up your husband's failings to your observation did so with any view of conciliating your regard. I am also sorry that I must be under the necessity of saying, my doors can no longer be opened to you; and that if one syllable of this conversation transpires, or I hear Mr. Hayman's name is coupled with Adelaide's in any circle where we are known, I shall be compelled to expose you in your true colours, and to warn every married pair of my acquaintance from subjecting themselves to your treacherous proceedings."

I walked out of the room at the conclusion of this sentence, for my oppressed heart could not have allowed of my uttering another word. Tears relieved me a little, but the barbed arrow had been too deeply transfixed to be easily eradicated. The ingratitude of this woman struck me most forcibly.

Her husband had left her in very indigent circumstances, and through Mr. Hayman's influence with some of her wealthy relations, who had disapproved of her marriage, they had given her a pension, which enabled her to move in the same circle she had done while a wife. There were people who imputed Mons. Dulay's ill success in life to the extravagance of his wife; but as I had not known her till she was to be considered as an object in distress, I could not judge whether she merited this censure. That she was rapacious I had frequently observed; also, that she had no delicacy in accepting presents from those who had liberality enough to offer any.

My meditations, you will believe, were not of the most pleasing kind. The more I recalled to my mind the graceful animated William, the more I condemned his father for deserting his mother, and the less hope did I

entertain of being mistress of his affections. Luckily I was undisturbed by the presence of the object who had ever been dear to me; and whom, unworthy as I might deem him, was still my husband, and as such ought to be judged by me with lenity and a proper consideration of circumstances to which I was then a stranger.

On his return, he observed an alteration in my appearance, and enquired so tenderly respecting my health, and the mode in which I had contrived to pass my time while he was on his journey, that, had not the forms of Adelaide and William swam before my eyes, I should have been truly happy. His scrutinizing glance seemed to seek to penetrate into the inmost recesses of my soul, while he said, "What has occurred, my dear Clara, during my absence, to give you uneasiness?" "Nothing that can interrupt my felicity," I replied, "now that I see you

safe; do not distress yourself, I shall soon be well." The expression of his countenance shewed that he placed little reliance on my assurance.

After spending a few hours in the most friendly communications, in which he seemed to be desirous of inspiring confidence, and banishing all traces of uneasiness from my mind, Mr. Hayman said, " I have been thinking, my dear, that you, who live so much in your own house, and are so frequently deprived of my society, would be the better of a companion to amuse your vacant hours, and when in the country, to accompany you in your walks or rides." Involuntarily I exclaimed, " You do not mean to propose Madame Dulay!" when I checked myself. " Madame Dulay!" repeated Mr. Hayman, " how came you to imagine I could think of her? I am too well acquainted with the purity of your heart and mind, to believe her manners, or mode of think-

ing and acting, could assimilate with your's. I should suppose a young person, over whom you had some authority, and for whose opening virtues, and expansion of ideas, you could feel a lively interest, would be the most proper object to select."

At that moment it darted into my mind that Mr. Hayman wished to take William into the house. "Do not, I beseech you," I exclaimed with some vehemence, "keep me any longer in suspense! If there is any child whom you wish to acknowledge from being your offspring, I will receive it with thankfulness, and cherish it as my own. Indeed you may rely on my hearty acquiescence in such a plan."

"Clara, what means this agitation?" said he, taking my hand. "Surely you have not suffered your good sense to be imposed upon by listening to some officious impertinent? Madame Dulay durst not inform you of what I

meant should always be concealed from you."

My tears flowed fast: the interesting appeal of my husband I could not resist. Insensibly I laid my head upon his shoulder, and, but for his arms encircling me, should have fallen on the ground.

"Why, my dear Hayman, any concealments from your wife? If the lovely boy called William be your son—"

"You have seen him then? You were the charming lady, who, he told me, had presented him with a pair of gold buttons."

"Yes, I was, and I have seen Adelaide; how could you offer vows to me, when your heart must have acknowledged her as its mistress! Is it only to woman that man can be faithless with impunity, and walk erect as if he were blameless?"

"I acknowledge that I am unworthy of possessing such a treasure of

goodness as you are ; and, difficult as the task is, I must seek to convince you that I am not so culpable as you imagine. In the first place be assured, that since I was married to you, I have never seen the mother of William but in the presence of a third person ; and also, that Madame Dulay has tried every artifice, which a wanton like her knows so well how to practise, in order to draw me to herself ; and her failure of success has induced her to endeavour to destroy our happiness by other methods. I trust, however, it will be the means of uniting us in still closer bonds of friendship ; for though I own myself faulty ; yet, from the greatness of mind you have already shewn, I am confident you will be both a patient hearer and an impartial judge."

In reply I said, " When I think of Adelaide's beauty and timidity, I must reprobate the man who has bereaved

her of her honour ; though it will be peculiarly gratifying to me to find it practicable to exonerate my husband from blame."

You will believe he tried to soften that part of the story which would have borne hard on himself. Adelaide had certainly shewn no prudence in listening to the suit of a man, though she felt regard for him, knowing that it was not in his power to elevate her to the rank of his wife, without incurring censure from those with whom he was connected ; which must have embittered her happiness, as well as in a great degree retarded his success in his commercial pursuits. In a place where her obscurity of connections and confined education was so well known, she could never have felt at ease as the mistress of Mr. Hayman's table. The ambition of her mother, who traced her genealogy till it reached a German barony, led to the encouragement of

Mr. Hayman's visits, instead of their prohibition; and she did not demand an explanation of his motives, trusting too implicitly to the influence of her daughter's beauty for accomplishing a point, the advantages of which she was fully sensible of. Had Adelaide been an orphan, possibly she might have risen superior to temptation, by giving no opportunities of being assailed by it.

Overwhelmed with sorrow, oppressed with guilt, the poor sufferer had no confidant, no counsellor, but him from whose fatal attachment all her griefs originated. To endure the taunts of her companions, and the reproaches of her mother, seemed to Adelaide to be worse than death; and unless she could devise some means of getting away from her own home in an early stage of her pregnancy, her disgrace was inevitable. She had a sister married in England, who had often invited

her to pay herself and family a visit. To prevail on her mother to permit her acceptance of this offer, was the only feasible plan the poor girl could project for avoiding the dreadful blow which was suspending over her head. This was at length obtained; and Mr. Hayman soon found a family going to London, who agreed to take a young person in their suite who wanted protection thither.

In short, by dint of money and fair promises, the whole business was concealed from the connections of Adelaide at home. After having nursed the child in her sister's house six months, Adelaide left it to her care; getting into a family of distinction as an attendant on two young ladies, whose mother was particularly desirous that they should acquire a fluency in languages; and Adelaide, being accustomed to speak French as well as Ger-

man, was on that account preferred to many other candidates for the place.

She had been about a year settled in this manner when we arrived in England; and was then occupied by the duties of her situation, which was at the family-seat some distance from London. The sight of the child, Mr. Hayman assured me, awaked in him a variety of emotions. He called upon the sister of Adelaide and her husband, without apprising them of his intention; and was shocked to see the whole family crowded into one apartment, in a close part of the city, from which the light of day seemed altogether excluded. The liberal allowance made for the child might have enabled them to keep more of their house to themselves; but the love of gain absorbed all other considerations; and though the sister had, while Adelaide was in town, made a pretence of con-

sulting the child's health and accommodation, when her actions were no longer under her observation, all these promises were forgotten. To do her justice, however, she was equally indifferent respecting her own offspring.

Mr. Hayman having obtained Adelaide's address, wrote to request her permission to communicate to her mother every circumstance relative to her situation, and to intreat her taking charge of the child. If she consented, he promised to settle an annuity on her for life, as well as to allow an adequate sum for the boy's maintenance.

The correspondence of the delicate minded though unhappy Adelaide, had always reflected the highest honour on the feelings of her heart, and the rectitude of her principles. From the moment of her arrival in England, she relinquished all claims upon the affections of her lover; acquitting him, at the same time, of having practised any

deception, or made any false promises, in order to induce her to comply with his wishes. And only lamenting her own susceptibility, she conjured him, if she did not survive her delivery, to transfer the attachment he once cherished for her, to her helpless offspring, for whose sake alone she wished to live. The same sentiments were conspicuous through many letters which I perused. In that relative to the removal of the child to her mother's she said, there was but one objection that could be formed to the proposal, which was, the fear that any ill-natured person might, by indiscreet communication, affect the peace of Mrs. Hayman; a misfortune she should ever deplore, and to avert which she would willingly sacrifice every personal consideration. She trusted, however, if her mother could be induced to forgive her, that she would also promise to receive her son as the offspring of her mar-

ried daughter, which would prevent the possibility of her fears being realized. Her own banishment might end, when it suited her convenience, without dread of encountering the contumely of her former acquaintance.

The mother, sensible by this time that her conduct had been more reprehensible than her daughter's, was disposed to do whatever Mr. Hayman thought most likely to conduce to her happiness. William was therefore conveyed to her house, where he was paid every possible attention. In two years his mother ventured to return, and from that moment, as well as during her residence in England, her life appears to have been not only free from reproach, but truly exemplary.

“ How Madame Dulay came by her information, I am at a loss to comprehend,” continued Mr. Hayman; “ I have been often tempted to warn you of her, but a false delicacy withheld

me; I think, however, her attack during my absence has proved that my lenity was ill-judged. You are perfectly unacquainted with the arts of the sex, or you must have noticed her frequent attempts to enter into conversation with me, merely to display the brilliancy of her wit. She was always devising pretexts to consult me on her husband's affairs; till one day I observed, that there was no business to be transacted between us that required privacy."

These communications from my husband, you will believe, did not altogether tend to calm my perturbed mind. I however drew satisfaction from one source, which was, that if, at any future period, Mr. Hayman should deem it expedient to acknowledge his son, (though for the sake of Adelaide, it could not now be thought of,) he would be well assured of his having had proper attention paid to his morals

in youth, and consequently there would be every probability of his proving a credit to any family into which he might be received. I could not reflect on the baseness of Madame Dulay, without finding my respect for the mother of William increased; and I lamented that I could not as unequivocally confer some mark of regard on the latter, as I had shewn contempt for the former.

On further conversation I found, that it was your mother whom Mr. Hayman wished to propose as a proper companion for me. Need I add how truly happy I was made by your grandfather, Mr. Carleton's, compliance with our request? Too swiftly did those years of felicity which we passed together wing their flight. You have doubtless heard from your parents many particulars which it would now pain me to relate. On the birth of my

son, how did I imagine I had attained to the summit of human happiness! Alas! how soon did it prove the contrary! Few people knew the causes which concurred to work up Mr. Hayman to the phrenzy which led to the commission of so dreadful a crime.

Adelaide's son was sent, at the age of eight, to an academy in Switzerland, at that time much celebrated for the learning of its masters and the proficiency of their pupils. Unhappily William was there attacked with the measles; and being deemed in imminent danger, no sooner was his mother apprized of his situation, than she immediately resolved to visit him, in the hopes that her care might preserve his life. Fatal indeed was her journey! She had the satisfaction of closing the eyes of her darling, of seeing his cold remains consigned to its native earth: but, alas! the grave had closed

on her reason ; the once beautiful, interesting Adelaide, was now an unhappy maniac.

These disastrous events were communicated to Mr. Hayman by a letter from the master, who knew not that he had any interest in the safety of the child, beyond that of fulfilling his duty as his guardian. You have been told that he had engaged in speculations ruinous to the concern, some of them unknown to his brother. Public calamity and private affliction assailing him at the same instant, he could not bear the poignancy of his own reflections. He was sensible when I reached the apartment where the dreadful act was committed. The letter lay on the table before him ; he told me to take it up. " You will protect the unhappy, you will love my child, and you will pray for the repose of my soul," were all the words he could utter, when he fell senseless on the floor.

That I preserved my faculties was to myself a miracle. My intellects must, however, have been much impaired, when I could send my child to England in the manner I did. Most unfit was I to have it under my own care, from the profound melancholy into which I was plunged; though surely no person was so proper to take the charge as Mr. Charles Hayman. Had it not been for the derangement of his affairs absorbing his attention, he would doubtless have made enquiries respecting the disposal of his nephew, which might have rescued him from the hands of those mercenary beings who, rather than give up the pecuniary advantages they derived from me, would take a helpless infant across the ocean, to encounter the dangers which their desperate fortunes rendered it expedient for them to brave. If I were once assured that my child had actually paid the debt

of nature, I should rest satisfied; the possibility of his being in existence, deprived of the advantages of education, probably too the slave of vice, it is this supposition that is the cause of that deep-rooted sorrow which pervades my whole frame, and at times renders me insensible to the voice of consolation. I had full confidence in the probity of Mr. and Mrs. Clayton, or I never should have given so sacred a deposit into their possession. The husband had been in Mr. Hayman's employ several years: his wife, though not a woman whom I could have received when I had select parties, was one of those motherly kind of characters who are always ready to give assistance in sickness, or on extraordinary occasions, when a counsellor of that description is requisite. She had lost an only child soon after the birth of mine; and the latter appeared to attract no small portion of the affection

formerly engrossed by her own. It was her proposal taking charge of my son; her husband, finding his situation in Hamburgh much changed for the worse, by the recent events, determined on removing to England, where I am confident at that time it was their intention to settle. It was doubtless wrong for me to encounter a certain evil, in order to avoid an imaginary one. I would not communicate with my brother-in-law on the disposal of my dear boy, because I wished him to be some time ignorant of his family-name, lest his feelings should be wounded by hearing abruptly of his father's untimely death. I doubt not that the poor people suddenly determined on the expedition which proved so fatal to themselves; and that, knowing their care of the child could not be exceeded by my own, contrived to reconcile themselves to the flagrant enormity of carrying him out of the king-

dom, without having first obtained my consent.

I had few persons to advise with; the dreadful calamity I had encountered keeping every one, from motives of delicacy, at a distance. My firm friend Mr. Lichstein was dead, and his wife retired to Switzerland, to reside among her own relations. To have attempted to write to any person, would only have been recording my own imbecility; for had the preservation of my life depended on it, I could not have committed my distracted thoughts to paper with any degree of coherency. In recollecting the cruel necessity by which I was governed, I have sought to extenuate my offences in my precipitate banishment of him, who, after the loss of my husband, should have been my chief earthly consolation. Had I possessed your advantages, my amiable friend; had I been instructed by a father like

yours; brought up under the eye of a Mrs. Neville, whose example of firmness and resolution in difficulty and distress, inspired you with a heroism which has made you rise superior to the shocks of adversity! I might, in such a critical moment, have been capable of extricating myself from the dangers with which I was environed.

My mode of education pointed to no exercise of the active virtues. My intercourse with mankind had never led to any acquaintance with the vicious part of society. I believed every person was what they appeared to be; my own heart was free from guile, and ever responsive to marks of affection and regard bestowed upon me, without waiting to ascertain whether the source from which they flowed, was pure and unmixed. It was not till I lost Agatha, that I became thoroughly acquainted with my own character, and

sensible of my manifold imperfections. My restlessness and impatience of restraint, after I had once pronounced vows which rendered me no longer a free agent, convinced me, that though *many* may be called *few* are chosen.

Solitude is truly to be coveted, when the mind is labouring under heavy affliction, when we have sustained losses that are irreparable, and which common consolation will not reach. This good I sought not sincerely, while I derived comfort from the society of her whom I so tenderly loved. The goodness of God manifested itself wonderfully in invigorating the powers of my mind, and in inspiring me with a desire of gaining knowledge from books, which in the former part of my life had seldom been awakened. To you, who imbibed a taste for reading at so early an age, I need not descant on the happiness which those enjoy who are thus in-

dependent of others for their gratifications; and who, while they study, ponder and reflect on the subjects under discussion; by this means extracting the essence of the works they read, and applying with all diligence to the correction of their faults, and the subduing of their passions, which they frequently discern to be of the same tendency with the more glaring vices held up to their observation in the characters of others; and which, but for the lesson inculcated by a fair exposition of their effects, they might otherwise have deemed little deserving of censure or eradication.

CHAP. XXXI.

Sweet source of every virtue, O sacred Sorrow !
He who knows not thee, knows not the best emotions of the heart,
Those tender tears that humanize the soul,
The sigh that charms, the pang that gives delight,
He dwells too near to cruelty and pride,
And is a novice in the school of virtue.

THOMSON.

CONTINUATION OF MRS. HAYMAN'S HISTORY.

IN the midst of my distress I was not forsaken. My beloved Agatha administered comfort, and opened the arms of friendship to receive me. The lady, who was superior of the convent while I was its inhabitant, had been two years dead when I became a widow. Fortunately for all who were then members of the society, the pious

but candid and merciful Agatha, was appointed in her stead. She was now, therefore, possessed of both ability and inclination to render to the afflicted mourner those delicate attentions, of which her bigoted predecessor was not capable; fearing, possibly, that unless she clothed the object of her worship in a robe of terror, she should fail in the performance of her duty. Alas! how erroneous are such conceptions of the Deity! how many are by such harsh instructors driven to despair! finding themselves unable to support the burthens imposed, they take refuge in unbelief, and become as conspicuous for the immorality of their conduct, as they might have been celebrated for a contrary deportment, had their spiritual directors been guided in their doctrines by true religion.

In the convent, then, I found an assured asylum, a haven of rest. Satisfied with the accounts I received of my

son, who seemed attached to the persons to whose care he was entrusted, which was a strong proof of their striving to fulfil their duty towards him, I endeavoured to tranquillize my spirits, and by degrees recovered sufficient composure to receive visits from those of my acquaintance, whose strength of attachment prompted them to seek out the unhappy.

The sight of the gentleman who was present when I confided my son to the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Clayton, and by whose means the money transactions were arranged, awakened many sensations. Too soon did I learn from him the fatal truth. Not until the merchant in London had received intelligence that the unhappy people had fallen a sacrifice to an epidemical disease in another country, where they sought for shelter, was it communicated to me that my son had been removed from England.

* * * * *

Let me draw a curtain over many succeeding years.—Agatha was my stay, without her I had been lost.

At the time when this amiable woman was attacked by a disease which threatened her dissolution, we were also alarmed by the promulgation of the Emperor Joseph's intentions to sequester the revenues of our house, and to disperse the society. All our care could not prevent this report being communicated to our dying friend. Her distress on my account was great; she advised me to remove to France, to a convent of Ursulines, where a near relation of her own had long resided, and to whom she would recommend me in the strongest terms. In paying the last sad offices to this inestimable woman, I felt all my sorrows renewed. A niece of her's, who had not completed her noviciate, I took under my protection; and little disposed as I

was to take care of myself, the consciousness that another person looked to me for support, impelled me to exertions, which, without this stimulus, I should have believed I was incapable of making.

I now rejoiced that Agatha had resisted my desire for taking the veil. My young companion and myself were therefore at liberty to depart whenever we pleased. We arrived at our place of destination without meeting any interruption on the road; the director of the convent having hired a person on whose fidelity he could depend, to be our escort. To him I entrusted all pecuniary transactions, which saved me from conversing with any one, unless prompted to it by inclination. Travelling certainly tended in a great measure to invigorate the body, as did the view of a fine country to subdue the anguish of the mind. If there had been one object on earth to attach

me to itself, one sympathetic soul on which I could have leaned for support, I should have relinquished my intention of going to the convent of Ursulines.

The animated face of nature in the landscapes around, seemed to reproach me for not enjoying its beauties. Here the pleasures of solitude, and the advantages derived from self-communion, might be as easily obtained as in the gloom of a monastery. On such a spot as this I could be recluse as I pleased, and yet be of service to my poor neighbours, to whom a little of my superfluous wealth might at some seasons be peculiarly acceptable. Thus did I soliloquize in a beautiful vale through which we passed with more rapidity than accorded with my inclinations.

Soon were these rational reflections banished from my mind, when I became an inmate of that dreary abode, where the very air was impregnated by superstition and false zeal.

You may already have discovered, my dear girl, that I was of a compliant temper, and that my thoughts were apt to take the complexion of the outward objects which assailed their senses. While contemplating the beauties of creation, my soul expanded; I enjoyed a tranquil sensation of delight, though the grave had as completely closed on my happiness, as when afterwards I believed it essential to my salvation to devote myself to God, and to renounce the world for ever.

Let those who may read my narrative, beware of following my example. The ghostly confessor of a nunnery, generally partakes of the qualities of the superior: it is congeniality of sentiment that at first promotes him to the office, and which afterwards ensures his continuance.

The superior of the convent of Ursulines, bore a much greater affinity to her, under whose care I was first placed,

than to my beloved sister Agatha. She appeared altogether indifferent respecting my determinations, while she lost no opportunity of making herself agreeable to me, and of extolling the piety and goodness of the sisterhood over which she presided. My young friend was allowed another year for her noviciate, from the time of her entering with me ; she had no choice, her friends had devoted her to the cloister, nor did she appear to repine at her destination. By degrees I was wrought into a belief that nothing short of an absolute renunciation of society, and a rigid adherence to the strict discipline practised by the sisters of St. Ursula, could appease an offended Deity. This I believed, though my faith did not extend so far as to think it necessary to bestow my whole fortune on the convent. One half I made over to a merchant in London, to hold in trust for my son, should he ever be heard of ; half of the remain-

der I reserved for my own use, and the other portion I freely gave to the Charitable Fund, hoping that it might never be of such value as to occasion the abolition of the house; for the Emperor Joseph, in the suppression of religious houses in Brabant and German Flanders, took special care to pass over all those whose finances were in a low state.

So much was I under the dominion of prejudice, at the period of which I am now treating, that I even considered as criminal those wishes that were excited on my journey from Bruges. I imagined that, having been the instrument of causing the banishment of my child, and his subsequent death, I was unworthy of partaking of the enjoyments of those who performed the duties to their offspring, in which I had been so miserably deficient. Instead of seeking to soothe my perturbed spirits, as was the office of my ghostly fa-

ther, "he preached no tidings of peace and good will towards man," but by sacrifice. Who could credit, without having witnessed it, the sullen dissatisfaction that too often reigns in those societies, the members of which have professed themselves the servants of God? whose sole delight ought to be in prayer and thanksgiving, and in performing those acts of devotion and self-denial, peculiar to the order to which they belong.

No sooner did the dreams of religious enthusiasm give place to the deductions of sober reason, than I began to repent of the step I had taken. I thought if I had come to England when compelled to quit Bruges, I should have acted wisely; and that, by constant enquiries, some positive information might at last have been obtained, of my ever-to-be-lamented, though long lost son.

This idea took full possession of me,

and the indulgence of the regrets it gave rise to, brought on such debility, that I was utterly unable to comply with the prescribed rules, or even to quit my cell, except when supported by some of the sisters, who led me to the garden to enjoy the fresh air. The relation of Agatha, whom I found among the sisterhood of St. Ursula, was as kind to me as the native coldness of her disposition would permit. To her I could not disclose the cause of my indisposition; the only person whom I sought to attach to me was my companion on my journey, now called sister Marie, as I was sister Terese; both taking our Christian names from the Empress Queen; but it would have been very improper to have told Marie, that I repented of my vows, as that might have led her to discover that her's had also been too hastily made. Though in the depth of my grief, I felt most acutely the want of a faithful bo-

som, on which I could have relied for consolatory advice, I believe it was much better that this was denied me; for, when my health began to mend, and along with it my faculties were in some degree restored to their former vigour, I felt ashamed of my weakness, and rejoiced that no person was privy to my unavailing regrets, the yielding to which had occasioned my disorder. Several years did I strive to combat with my feelings, and to become a sincerely devout sister of St. Ursula.

Certain I am, that some forms are necessary, in order to impress a sense of obligation on the creature towards the Creator; but as confident shall I ever be, that a multiplicity of ordinances tends to weaken the spirit of devotion, rather than to increase it. Many excellent works of the divines of both the catholic and protestant churches, had the worthy Mr. Lichstein purchased for me during my

abode in his house. My library had been always preserved with care; though, while I enjoyed the counsels and conversation of the exemplary Agatha, I did not feel the same necessity for having recourse to it, as I did on my removal from Bruges. It was not, however, till after I had suffered so severely from brooding on my own reflections, that I knew the full value of my possessions. The spirit of philanthropy and toleration for all religions, which many of them breathed, spoke forcibly to the heart; I felt some of the sentiments as emanations of the Divinity, and I revered that voluntary homage paid to his sovereign power and goodness, in places where the name of Jesus has not been made known, nor his religion preached. I hoped that day was not far distant, when the glad tidings conveyed through the Gospel, should be spread from pole to pole. Thus did I try by rational

means to break the monotony of a conventual life.

The prospect of obtaining at my death the money vested by me in the funds of England, if I should be satisfied with the treatment I received, I believe procured me many indulgencies, which, without this hope, would not have been granted ; the chief of these was, having the privilege of remaining in my cell, without being asked how I employed myself when there.

Much as our society at Bruges had been alarmed by the decrees of the Emperor, they were trifling when compared to what assailed us, when, in consequence of the Revolution in France, instant annihilation was threatened to all establishments. Not long were we suffered to remain in suspense : the storm soon broke over our heads. All the religious were permitted to depart ; sister Marie, timid and fearful, clung to me for protection ; I told her

that, unless she could brave every danger, and accompany me to England, I could afford her none. This she readily promised to do, and I hoped to rescue one victim of superstition from the thralldom in which all are held, who pronounce vows that are irrevocable.

Signifying my intention to the Lady Abbess, previous to the general dispersion, I requested permission to resume my former habit, and to furnish Marie with a suite of the same kind, in order to avoid observation. The latter part of it the infatuated woman peremptorily refused. I might do as I pleased, but for the holy Agatha's niece, she should not quit the walls of the convent but in the habit of her order. Resolutely bent on the preservation of this excellent girl, I determined to run all risks, though I was credibly informed that the fury of the populace had been excited against our house, and that my

only chance for escaping without molestation, was to pass for an English lady on her travels, who had no connection with Lady Abbesses or nunneries.

I concealed my fears from Marie, who was already sufficiently agitated at the idea of launching into the world. My plan was, to make the best of my way to a sea-port, and there to hire a vessel to transport myself to England. I also determined at the first stage to effect some change in my companion's dress, which for the present I endeavoured to conceal, by wrapping her in a long cloak, and tying a large hat over her head, to shroud her from observation.

When we alighted at the post-house, I desired to be shewn into a chamber, as I had a sick lady with me who required rest. No horses were to be obtained; and though much against my inclination, we were obliged to remain

there that night ; early in the morning, I was told there was a person requested to see me. I ventured down stairs to converse with the stranger, who to my surprise accosted me by the name of Hayman. He was of a swarthy complexion, prominent features, and dark expressive eyes.—“ Madam,” said he, “ though you do not know me, perhaps you may recollect the name of Moses Alvarez, a merchant of Hamburgh ; I am his son.” I begged him to proceed, adding that the name of his father recalled to my remembrance happier times.

“ I doubt not that it does,” he replied ; “ I am sure all our family will rejoice, if it is in my power to render any service to the widow of Mr. Hayman. I am in France, Madam, on business which I cannot unfold ; and mean to avail myself of the first conveyance which offers, to depart for England. When I left Hamburgh,

my father was aware of the danger which threatened religious houses; he knew I must pass very near that in which he heard at Bruges you had taken shelter, and desired me to give you this intimation, and to offer my services to assist you out of France. "Here are my credentials," (continued the young man, presenting a paper.) "I made application to see you at the convent last night, when I was informed of your departure, and hearing that there was a nun in the house, I ventured to request an interview, judging that if you answered to the name of Hayman, I might disclose my own with propriety."

The paper delivered to me, contained directions from the senior Alvarez, corroborating his son's declaration, and stating that he should consider it as one of the most fortunate events of his life, if he should be at all instrumental to the deliverance of any one connected

with his much-lamented friend, to whose liberal support on his first outset in life, he might attribute the success which attended many of his undertakings. This proof of gratitude in a man professing a faith so different from mine (the family of Alvarez being Jews from Portugal) affected me more than I can express. Most willingly did I give my hand to Joseph, accepting his proffered protection with thanks, and requesting that he would order horses that we might proceed on our journey with all possible dispatch. He assured me of the impracticability of our proceeding, if it were known, that either myself or my friend were of a religious order; it being a received opinion, that the heads of convents were privately conveying away from them their jewels, and other portable articles of value, from the dread of a direct attack on their property, and that for that

purpose the sisterhood were going off at intervals in pairs.

God forgive me for the suspicion which then darted across my mind! I repented of the confidence I had placed, and imagined that the young Israelite had fabricated his tale respecting his father's connection with my husband, in order to learn whether I really was possessed of the convent jewels; and, if so, to betray me to the municipality of some of the towns through which we might pass. The national cockade, which I now discerned to be in his hat, the *tout ensemble* of his appearance, all proclaimed him a favourer of republicanism; if so in his heart, an atchievement of this kind would procure him civic honours, instead of his treachery exciting indignation.

My countenance plainly indicated what passed within. The generous

Alvarez looked at me with evident concern, while he strove to repress the disdainful blush which suffused his cheek. "Is it, madam," he asked, (after a silence of some moments,) "because I am a *Jew*, that you doubt my zeal in your service? or is it the ribbon in my hat? I can make many allowances for the prejudices of religion, and the timidity contracted by long seclusion. Be assured, however, that you may rely implicitly on my care and fidelity. Without this garb, which is foreign to my feelings, I could neither protect you, nor ensure safety to myself." I freely confessed that his conversation had awakened fears; but declared that they were not only banished, but I felt the deepest regret for having entertained them. Mutual confidence being thus established, I mentioned to Marie that I had fortunately been recognised by an old acquaintance, who had offered to be our escort, and whose

connection with the people then in power, would enable him to afford us that protection of which we stood so much in need.

This intelligence re-animated my fair friend; she stepped into the carriage procured for us with an agility of which I had scarcely thought her capable.

The novelty of our situation, and the difficulties attendant on our journey, gave us so much food for meditation, that neither of the party were disposed to be very loquacious. The address of my newly-acquired friend I had frequent opportunities of admiring, as well as his delicacy in concealing from me, that if he had not at the inn acknowledged me as his relation, and shewn his passport from the commune of Paris, as well as spoken of his services to the Republic, he believed I should have found it very difficult to get away from it; their orders being very explicit as to the detention of wo-

men, supposed to be nuns, who were travelling towards the sea-coast.

To relate the incidents of our journey would be endless. Had I delayed it two days, the consequences would have been fatal. I shudder, when I recollect the various reports which reached my ears of the cruelties practised on defenceless women and helpless old age. The hapless Marie almost sunk under the fatigue and terror which she experienced. Sometimes detained for hours in places most exposed to observation, we found it necessary to attire ourselves in the livery of the Republic, and frequently, when fear almost deprived us of utterance, to shout with vehemence, *Vive la Nation*, &c. &c.

That we should ever have reached England, but for the indefatigable zeal of our protector, I much doubt. His passport expressed permission to depart for himself and female relation, which he contrived to turn into the plural, and by this means, being judged friends of

the indivisible republic, we were suffered to embark without molestation. When fairly at sea, I returned thanks to Heaven for my deliverance. The dangers of the boisterous element I considered to be trifling, contrasted with those we had so recently escaped; a watery grave was even to be preferred to the chance of enduring the indignities that were wantonly inflicted on the persons of those belonging to the various religious orders, now hunted out of their native land by the fury of an enraged populace.

How joyfully did we hail the white cliffs of Albion! Propitious was our landing in this happy Isle, where the most obscure individual is as much protected by the laws, as the noble in his castle, or the monarch on his throne. Mutual congratulations on our having reached a place of security, made each individual more open and communicative than we had before ventured to be; for even on board the ship we

dreaded to enter on any interesting conversation, lest the sailors might suspect we had property of value about us, and probably think setting us ashore, and detaining our baggage for themselves, was full good enough treatment for the enemies of France.

As the character of Alvarez developed itself, I found new proofs of his liberality of sentiment, and of the extent of his attainments. Most of the European languages were familiar to him. He had studied a little, and observed more; as is generally the case with those who are more conversant in manners and mankind than with books, he possessed in an eminent degree, the art of assimilating his ideas with the received opinions of those with whom he conversed, so as neither to appear servilely compliant, or tenacious of preserving a superiority, which his extensive information might at his age have rendered pardonable.

What became of poor sister Marie, when a willing hearer of this young man's entertaining conversation? The peculiarity of her situation, the distresses she was so little able to encounter, and which he strove to mitigate by every means in his power, all awakened in Alvarez's breast a sincere sympathy for the dejected Marie. She clung to us both for support; having from her confined education, and recluse life, no resources but what were derived from others. As we protect a helpless child, thrown on our compassion by Providence, so did the wandering sister of St. Ursula experience the watchful care of a brother from our amiable Israelite.

Accustomed to mix in the best society, to converse freely with women of a superior class, it would have been surprising if the negative virtues and slender pretensions to beauty which Marie possessed, had made any impres-

sion on his heart. But this did not render her less susceptible of his attractions. On our arrival in London, when it became necessary for us to separate, I was fully convinced of the interest excited by Alvarez in the bosom of his fellow-traveller. The innocence and purity of her thoughts, made her not suspect the cause of her agitation, on his taking his leave, after having seen us safely lodged in private apartments.

The only time I had entered the capital of England, how differently had I been circumstanced to what I now was! A lapse of more than thirty years had not so far blunted my sensibilities, as to take from me the power of drawing comparisons which rendered me most unfit for consoling another. Thus left to her own reflections, the hapless Marie sunk into despondency.

By the assiduousness of Alvarez, the merchant who had transacted my bu-

siness while in the convent, and to whose care I had devolved the sum appropriated for my son's use, soon found his way to my lodgings, and offered every assistance and friendly attention that I could desire or expect. From the society of his family I derived much satisfaction. His daughters strove to amuse my young friend, nor did they altogether fail of success. Alvarez was so much occupied by commercial concerns while in London, that his visits, though frequent, were short. A man of the same penetration, aided by a little portion of vanity, could not have failed to observe the pleasure sparkling in Marie's eyes at his approach, and the regret which, in spite of her efforts to the contrary, evidently appeared at his departure.

He shewed me letters from his father, requesting to know in what way he could be of farther service, and re-

joicing most sincerely that his son had been instrumental to my escape.

The young man seemed so earnest for me to entrust him with some commission, that I involuntarily exclaimed, "It is only in America that any enquiry can be made, the result of which might render my mind easy."

"Then, Madam," replied Alvarez, while his fine dark eyes seemed to inspire me with hope, "even there I may be useful; for in a few weeks I shall embark for the new world."

"Surely you have been sent by Heaven to comfort me," I answered, "perhaps, however, your affairs lead you to the southward; 'tis at New York, that your friendly zeal might be exerted in my behalf."

"That city I shall assuredly very soon visit; for my father's brother has been settled there more than five-and-twenty years, and has often expressed a desire that some of our family should go over

to him. I am therefore to take charge of a younger brother, who was named from him, and who, it is likely, may remain some years in his family."

A drowning man will catch at a twig. In a moment expectation was surprisingly awakened, after having for so long an interval lain dormant. I sat down and made memorandums of all the particulars I knew respecting the people who had carried off my son, referring for still fuller information to the merchant, who had frequently seen Mr. and Mrs. Clayton in England, and could also give the name of his correspondent in New-York, who had communicated the fatal ravages of the fever, which it was supposed had exterminated the whole family. This done, I took an affectionate leave of my highly-valued friend, requesting to be informed by letter of the time of his embarkation.

The summer heats in the capital soon

became irksome to me; Marie could take no exercise but in a carriage, and I saw her health and spirits were alike drooping. I had not forgotten my former wish of finding out my father's relations in the North. Hiring a female attendant, I left London in the end of August, meaning to take easy journeys, and to stop wherever any pleasant prospect attracted our notice; as I hoped, by diversifying the objects, and amusing the mind of my young friend, to banish in some degree that melancholy which I feared might otherwise prove fatal. The disease had taken deep root long before my plan was put in execution, though of this I was not aware, till some alarming symptoms determined me to have recourse to medical advice. This, my dear Miss Neville, was not till I reached Chesterfield. Need I add how ineffectual was all aid? Most faithfully did the worthy Doctor Gordon perform his duty towards his

patient, and I derive no small satisfaction from his assurance, that her constitution was so feeble, and her frame so fragile, that she could not support the change in her manner of life, added to the uneasiness which preyed on her mind, at the recollection of the scenes she had witnessed, and the perilous situation of many of her relations, of whose safety or death we could only procure intelligence from the public prints. Thus was I fated once more to feel myself an insulated being in a strange land, surrounded by mercenary wretches, who with sacrilegious hands even pillaged the dead; asserting as their right, the possession of a few relics, which I would willingly have redeemed for treble their value. In tearing myself from the cold remains of the niece of my beloved Agatha, I was daring enough to upbraid the almighty for having protracted the days of my pilgrimage to so unnecessary a length.

My reason was unsettled, therefore I trust my errors may be forgiven. Surely the unfeelingness of my servant will at some future period meet its due punishment! Without expressing the slightest regret for the distress into which I was plunged, she demanded her wages, saying, " she was not going to nurse the sick, or attend upon outlandish *forriners* any more; they ought to have Papishes like themselves to wait on them; for her part, if she was once safe back at *Lunnun*, she would know better than to leave it again to run about the Lord knows where." After having paid the full amount of her demands, and discharged her, I was told by my landlady, that she could not suffer a corpse to remain in her apartment; therefore she hoped, when the undertaker brought the coffin, I would desire him to remove it to his house. These contentions with low-minded people so completely unhinged

me, that I told her she might give what order to the undertaker she thought fit, only to recollect, that Doctor Gordon would not suffer me to be ill-treated by them, or any one else; and that I requested he might be sent for to see me, as I was going to bed extremely ill, and stood much in need of his assistance. To this worthy man am I indebted, under Divine Providence, for the preservation of my life. He soon procured me a skilful nurse, who most faithfully discharged the trust reposed in her; and during my illness, both my property and life have been almost equally at her disposal.

When Doctor Gordon told me there was a young lady who desired to be admitted to visit me, "Ah," cried I, "if I were certain she was not actuated by curiosity!" How was I humbled by his reproofs. In truth I deserved them, had I not been contending with mental as well as bodily weaknesses. This

consideration induced him to forgive me; and, as a pledge of returning friendship, to bring you to give efficacy to the restoratives he prescribed.

I will not raise a blush on your cheek by a recapitulation of the essential service you have rendered me, but I will tell you, that often on my knees have I blest the hour that I directed my wandering steps to Derbyshire, and that induced me to remain in Chesterfield.

Dark and inscrutable are the ways of Providence! I will not, however, believe, that the complicated misfortunes which drove you to take shelter in your aunt's house, have not been inflicted for a wise purpose. Next to my own offspring, or that of my husband, would I have wished to cherish a child of Louisa and Robert Neville's. Their first-born, for whom I took upon me vows that I have had no opportunity of

seeing fulfilled, has, by his treatment of you, in a great measure forfeited his claims upon my friendship. A time however may arrive, when his deviations from rectitude will be repaired by subsequent good behaviour; till we hear of him as worthy of our regard, we must strive to banish him from our remembrance.

For you, my dear girl, I hope you will from henceforth consider yourself as much my child by adoption, as your amiable mother was my sister in affection. Of wealth my store is great; how much more do I prize it, as it enables me to render you independent of the frowns of relations, who have not discernment enough to ascertain your value. I ask no return, for you have already given me your friendship; and I am mistaken if there is a secret of your heart which you would attempt to conceal from me. I will, through Dr.

Gordon, assure your aunt, that there is no danger of my seeking to convert you to the catholic faith; of which, I am told, she entertains serious apprehensions. I cannot blame her anxiety, while I pity her want of christian charity.

My obligations to the family of Alvarez, have, I trust, extinguished in my bosom every spark of prejudice against any sect whatever; well do I remember the time when I would have shuddered at believing myself in the power of a Jew.

I should tell you, that it was for my own sake, as well as being Mr. Hayman's widow, that the elder Alvarez was moved with compassion towards me. While I was an inhabitant of the convent at Bruges, I allowed to the mother of Adelaide the pension settled on her by Mr. Hayman, which he had neglected to secure on any per-

manent fund; consequently, as his property was all disposed of for the benefit of his creditors, it would have ceased. You will recollect this was granted as a compensation for boarding William, who was now dead. I continued it, on condition that she took her daughter home to her own house, and, as her complaints might make her require more attendance than she could afford, I added a trifle more, which was to cease on the death of Adelaide. Mr. Alvarez negociated the money transactions for the objects of my bounty; and this trifling mark of my consideration for their distresses made him ever anxious for my welfare. My pension to the daughter was no longer necessary before I left Bruges; the other was continued several years after my removal.

I have only to add, that I wish you, my dear girl, to hasten to inform me

when I may consider you of my household. Though I should have my son restored to me, he will little deserve my blessing, if he does not rejoice with me, that he has such a sister to share with him his fortune.

TERESE.

CHAP. XXXII.

Where then was truth, to sanctify the page
Of British Annals?

SHENSTONE.

THE various emotions that by turns swelled the bosom of Constantia, on perusing the eventful history of Mrs. Hayman, it would be difficult to pourtray to the satisfaction of the reader. Imagination must give the finishing touches to a picture which only the pencil of nature could sketch; whose enthusiastic colouring so far exceeds that of the most skilful artist, that but for the ardent desire of fame, all would give up the attempt in despair of attaining excellence.

That the deliverance of a professed sister of a holy order should have been effected by the interposition of

one of that tribe, whom so many lukewarm Christians affect to despise, and to consider unworthy of being admitted to a participation of the benefits which all faithful and loyal subjects have a right to expect from the government under which they live, gratified the feelings of Constantia in the highest degree. Still more exquisite was the sensation, when she came to that part which declared that it was Mrs. Hayman's bounty and kind consideration for the distresses of the unhappy lost Adelaide, that interested the elder Alvarez in her favour, and infused into the mind of his son that respect and admiration of her good qualities and virtues, which prompted him, at all hazards, to become her protector. "Our deeds of mercy do ascend to the throne of the Most High," exclaimed Constantia; "though not often rewarded for them in so signal a manner on earth, they will

plead for us on that great day when the most virtuous, the most holy among men, must with fear and trembling shrink from the omniscient eye, to whose all-pervading glance even our secret faults stand confessed."

Thus does innocence and virtue extract pleasure from sources unknown to those, whose contracted notions and sordid souls cherish no kindred spark of generosity, and judging of others by themselves, believe that man cannot render service to his fellow-creature but for the hope of reward, or to obtain the praise of the world.

Most willingly did Constantia communicate to Mrs. Williamson those offers of protection from Mrs. Hayman, the acceptance of which was to end her dependence on one, for whom, in spite of every effort to the contrary, she could not feel any sentiment of genuine affection. To have withheld her approbation would have been im-

politic in the extreme. Mrs. Williamson, therefore, made a virtue of necessity; affecting both to her niece and to Mrs. Hayman, when admitted to her presence, that neither of them felt more pleasure at the happy issue of their respective journies to Derbyshire than she did. Removed to the habitation of her mother's first and dearest friend, Constantia seemed to breathe more freely than she had ever done, since she saw the cold remains of her ever-to-be-regretted father consigned to its native earth. Mrs. Hayman, in striving to rouse herself, lest she should infect her young friend with her melancholy, so far succeeded as to be able to partake of the amusement of riding in a carriage, to see the various objects which attract curiosity in the county of Derby. The cheerfulness of her companion, whose natural flow of conversation wanted not the artificial aid of company to enliven

it, was a cordial to her spirits. The library of the worthy Doctor Gordon also afforded no small portion of entertainment to both ladies; to whom he was as liberal of his visits as the necessary attention to the duties of his profession would permit. Thus peaceful at Chesterfield, Constantia's thoughts would sometimes wander to distant objects. Of how much more value would her present comforts and future prospects of independence have been, could she have communicated them to De Eresby! Frequently did she feel an impulse which she scarcely knew how to resist, and often did her pen almost involuntarily express to him the feelings of her heart.

Mrs. Hayman having mentioned to her young friend that she intended returning to the metropolis in the spring, in the hopes of meeting with letters from Alvarez, which would decide her future plans, a conflict in Constantia's

mind arose from a desire to leave her lover entirely to his own guidance, till her return to the place of his residence would enable her, from personal enquiries, to form some idea of the mode in which he had conducted himself during her absence.

Mrs. Williamson, who had been most indefatigable in endeavouring to impress her niece with an idea of her son's elegance, and the loftiness of her views for him in forming a matrimonial connection, was now as desirous of bringing about an union with the cousins, as she had before dreaded even the idea that an attachment could be excited in the breast of either party for the other. The young clergyman was certainly not devoid of attractions, neither was he insensible of the power of Miss Neville's charms, though the chilling indifference which she preserved in her manner when he addressed her, soon convinced him that her

affections were already engaged. Wishing to secure her good opinion as a friend, he laid aside those passionate exclamations which he had sense enough to perceive were disagreeable to his cousin, though he had found them of service in his former intercourse with the fair. Constantia had now seen too much of the world to reject kindness, because she did not find the conduct of the party who offered it was in every respect worthy of approbation. A fondness for dogs and horses, she did not think the most desirable propensity in a clergyman; neither did she conceive a taste for music, and being a performer on several instruments, the most appropriate qualifications on which such a character should have prided himself. Tracing these blemishes, however, to their proper source, the indulgence of parents, Miss Neville sought to find a rational companion in Mr. Williamson, who, on

perceiving that her information on most subjects was derived both from reading and observation, took some pains to exercise his faculties, in order that he might not appear in her eyes an idle dissipated Cantab, an appellation which too many of his companions he knew were not ashamed of meriting.

Thus at ease in the company of each other, Mr. Williamson and Miss Neville were on so friendly a footing in the presence of Mrs. Williamson, as to induce her to imagine that Mrs. Hayman's fortune was already secured to her own family. The attentions of the young clergyman were, on some occasions, very serviceable to both his cousin and her protectress, who frequently invited him to join in their little excursions, finding him a most intelligent guide, and zealous to point out the beauties of his native county, to the observation of ladies whose discernment he considered to be unquestionable.

One evening Mr. Williamson was invited by Mrs. Hayman to take tea with her in her own apartment, when he learned from her conversation, that her stay in Derbyshire would not be of long duration. The weather being milder than usual at that season, he ventured to propose to her a longer ride than any they had yet taken ; which, but for their intended departure, he said he should have preferred undertaking when the days were at the longest. This was to Hardwick, a seat of the Duke of Devonshire's, once the residence of the harsh Earl of Shrewsbury, to whose custody the beautiful and unfortunate Mary Stuart was committed by her cruel cousin, Elizabeth.

Mrs. Hayman, though not a bigot to her religion, must have been something more than woman, not to have felt a double portion of curiosity to explore recesses, where every spot must be sanctified by the remembrance of

the sufferings of one whose last hours were spent in proving her belief in the catholic faith. Constantia, whose generous enthusiasm in the cause of the beautiful Queen of Scots, had induced her to peruse with avidity every vindication of her injured fame, which she had been able to procure, thanked her cousin in the most animated terms for his information, as she had not till then recollected that such a seat was in this neighbourhood.

All parties being of one mind, not many days elapsed before they set out for Hardwick; the ladies enjoying their meditations in a close carriage, not a little pleased that their escort, being on horseback, it was not necessary to keep up a conversation with him. The want of foliage on the trees, which in the summer conceal the view of the towers, till almost on the confines of the park, gave our travellers a distant glimpse of them long before they ar-

rived near the castle. When near enough to perceive the beauties of the carved fretwork on the battlements, the letters E. S. under a coronet, frequently occurring, awakened curiosity, which was gratified by hearing that they were the initials and the memorials of the vanity of Elizabeth, Countess of Shrewsbury, under whose direction the edifice was built. In alighting from the carriage, sincerely did Constantia thank her cousin for the exquisite treat, and which, without exploring the castle, she already felt this visit to Hardwick would prove.

The beauties of the landscapes around having been already delineated in so masterly a style, it only remains for me to describe the impressions received from the contemplation of a building, at one time a prison of a Queen, and at another the stately residence, where—

" Throngs of knights and barons bold,
" In weeds of peace high triumphs hold."

Sacred were the emotions of both ladies on treading the walk where Mary had so often wandered, in the vain hope of discerning some friendly succour approaching to her relief. The scene of her arrival seemed to the mind's eye to be then realized. The sound of horses feet broke the stillness of the solemn shade. Mary's proud, yet gentle and melancholy look, contrasted with the jealous and vigilant countenance of my lord-keeper, who, while awed by dignity and suffering beauty, forgets not the terrors of his triumphant Queen, whose envy of the superior charms of her misguided cousin, led her to blot the glorious annals of her reign with a crime so foul, so unseemly, that not the most pampered minion of her court durst attempt to palliate, but by having recourse to the grossest perjuries.

“ Alas ! poor Mary,” said Constantia, as she touched with sacred awe the curtains of black velvet, embroidered with gold by the hands of the injured Princess. “ This exercise of ingenuity served to cheat lazy-footed time, when thou knewest not but that thy days were numbered ! To thee, ‘ Life must indeed have been as tedious as a twice told tale, vexing the dull ear of a drowsy man.’ And yet calm and serene were thy last moments ! When thou laidst thy head on the block, then did thy vindictive, self-created judge, receive a blow which she never could recover !” Entranced in thought, it is impossible to judge how long Constantia would have remained in the chamber inhabited by Mary, had she not been roused from her reverie by Mrs. Hayman complaining of fatigue, and requesting the attendant to shew her to an apartment where she could sit down and endeavour to gain

strength for a farther survey. In order to accomplish this, they were obliged to cross the picture gallery; where, contemplating the fair meek countenance of Lady Jane Grey, Constantia had the happiness to recognize the benevolent Mr. Cooper. The joy of both parties, at this unexpected meeting, neither attempted to conceal; forms were on such an occasion little worth regarding. Mr. Cooper accompanied his young friend down stairs, Mr. Williamson having led the way with Mrs. Hayman, who was soon sufficiently recovered to be introduced to a gentleman of whom she had already formed a most favourable opinion. The two parties joining, that from Chesterfield were introduced by Mr. Cooper to his companion, Mr. Lindgreen, who had not been long from the West Indies. It was in vain that Miss Neville tried to escape the scrutinizing regards of the stranger; as in-

effectual were her attempts to persuade herself that this was their first interview, though she felt it impossible to specify, whether it was the resemblance he bore to a long absent friend, or a previous acquaintance, that obtruded itself on her recollection. Mrs. Hayman calling her Constantia, seemed to elucidate, to the satisfaction of the stranger, a mystery which had given to his countenance a tinge of thoughtful perplexity, that appeared to have communicated to the placid features of Mr. Cooper. Mr. Lindgreen coming up to Constantia, asked her if he had not the happiness of meeting in her, the daughter of the late Mr. Neville of Barbadoes? and enquired if she did not remember Dr. Lewis, of the island of Grenada? "Most assuredly I do," she replied, "at the same I recollect that you, Sir, were with him, when he visited my father at Bridge Town. It is a long

time since I have heard of the worthy Doctor. I fear, by your looks, that the people of Grenada, have in him sustained a loss not easily to be repaired !”

“ In truth they have,” said Mr. Lindegreen ; “ let me, however, congratulate myself, and thank my worthy friend here, for the pleasure of renewing my acquaintance with a lady, whom I have in vain sought for among my West India connections in London.”

Mr. Cooper being on his way to Chesterfield to visit Doctor Gordon, the gentlemen promised (after having solicited Mrs. Hayman’s permission) to pay their respects to Miss Neville the next morning. Mr. Williamson, at first, though under a little embarrassment on his rencontre with a gentleman whose instructions he had once enjoyed, without deriving as much benefit from them as he might have done,

was however soon relieved from it by the ease with which his former preceptor received his civilities. The company left Hardwick together, the gentlemen being all on horseback, chatted freely as they rode along, sometimes calling the attention of the ladies to the various natural beauties which the turnings of the road disclose on a sudden, to the delight and astonishment of persons not familiarized to the fascinating irregularities of a Derbyshire landscape.

Arrived at home, the incidents of the morning furnished sufficient food for conversation. Contrary to Mrs. Hayman's custom on former excursions, she invited the young clergyman to dine with her, who gladly availed himself of the privilege, wishing most earnestly to learn from his cousin how it happened that she was so intimate with Mr. Cooper. The explanation did not altogether satisfy the enquirer;

he had, without immediately perceiving it, become daily more strongly attached to Miss Neville, so that transient admiration of the person had ripened into sincere affection, and profound respect from the powers of the mind. The natural warmth of heart, which the native of the torrid zone had not learned to repress to those whom she considered entitled to her gratitude and friendly regard, had so far deceived the lover, that he believed her rejection of his attentions, on the commencement of their acquaintance, arose from her then disliking his flippancy of speech, and assured manner of delivering his sentiments, as to the pursuits that ought to engross the attention of those who had the means to enjoy life without labour. He now imagined that Mr. Cooper had done him some ill offices, by giving a sketch of his youthful propensities, and that this accidental interview would obliterate the

favourable impression which he had fondly flattered himself his assiduities had made on the mind of his mistress. With such ideas floating on his brain, he was no very desirable companion. Constantia unwittingly added to the conflict within, by dwelling on the virtues and amiable qualities of the man, whom her cousin was considering as the foe of his peace, and heartily wishing fairly out of Chesterfield.

Mrs. Hayman withdrawing after dinner, Mr. Williamson had almost determined to make an immediate tender of his hand to the fair object of his hopes and wishes, who was wholly ignorant that she was the innocent cause of the perturbation which she perceived agitated the frame of her companion. Before he had regulated his ideas and attained a sufficient degree of composure to enter on a subject so interesting to his future happiness, a note from Mr. Cooper was delivered to Miss Ne-

ville, requesting that himself and friend might be allowed to wait upon her as soon that evening as possible, if consistent with the accommodation of Mrs. Hayman, Mr. Lindegreen having found waiting his arrival letters from London, requiring his immediate presence there; and being consequently obliged to set out for that city at a very early hour in the morning.

On Constantia's retiring to consult with Mrs. Hayman, and to answer Mr. Cooper's card, the contents of which she communicated to Mr. Williamson, the latter endured no small mortification; he, however, determined that the entrance of other visitors should be no signal for his departure; whatever his old tutor had chosen to say to his disadvantage formerly, he should have no opportunity on the present occasion, unless he chose to commence the attack in the presence of the enemy. Mrs. Hayman having instantly consented

to Miss Neville's receiving her friends, they arrived almost as soon as the ladies joined Mr. Williamson, whose gloomy silence for the first time attracted his cousin's notice so far, as to induce her to enquire if he were indisposed. This solicitude chased away some part of the suspicions that the sight of Mr. Cooper had excited; and when the gentlemen were announced, Mr. Williamson had most sagaciously resolved to shew them both, that the most perfect amity subsisted between his fair cousin and himself.

Mr. Lindegreen, anxious to profit by this hurried interview, devoted his whole attention to Miss Neville, who on her part delighted to dwell on subjects that reminded her of the incidents of her juvenile years. Mr. Lindegreen had, in pursuit of pleasure and health, taken a tour through Wales the preceding autumn, where he had seen many of the relations of

Doctor Lewis; from some of whom he had heard that the first intimation of his settlement in Grenada, that had ever reached them, had been communicated by a young lady, a connection of a branch of his family, who recognized his portrait. On farther enquiry, he learned that his old acquaintance, Mr. Neville's daughter, was the bearer of this welcome intelligence; and as he doubted not she would be anxious to preserve a memorial of a gentleman, for whom at so early an age she appeared to have imbibed a regard, he had brought her a copy of a poem, written by his friend when he quitted his native country, the original of which he found among his private papers at his decease.

Constantia received the poem with thankfulness, though to enjoy the conversation of Mr. Lindegreen, she put it up unread into her pocket-book; a transaction not unheeded by the watch-

ful eyes of Mr. Williamson, whose looks betrayed so forcibly the fears of a jealous lover, that Mr. Lindegreen determined to punish him still farther, by conversing in a low tone on topics that did not demand the ear of secrecy. The lady, for whose sake Doctor Lewis had braved those dangers, so pathetically anticipated by his mournful muse, had paid the debt of nature but a very short time previous to his meeting with the accident which occasioned his death: neither, however, knew that the other was in danger. Thus separated by the vast Atlantic, yet were they in death undivided; their pure spirits seeking to regain their native skies within a very short period of the same year.

While Mr. Lindegreen made these communications to Mis Neville, Mr. Cooper enjoyed the dignified but unobtrusive manners of the sister of St. Ursula, whose discourse, untinctured

with religious prejudices, and declaratory of universal good-will towards man, gave to his benevolent heart sensations such as it did not often experience. In rising to go away, he involuntarily offered another visit previous to his leaving Doctor Gordon, who, he said, had told him that he should find it difficult to meet such another attractive fireside in the whole town. Mr. Lindegreen at parting, gave to Miss Neville his card of address in London, hoping that on her arrival there, she would favour him with her commands, any of which he would be proud to execute. He earnestly wished also, to introduce to her acquaintance two of his sisters, who would rejoice to meet a countrywoman, and a member of a family, whose attention to him they had so frequently heard his father speak of in the highest terms. Most grating to the ears of Mr. Williamson were these declarations; but notwithstanding he af-

fectured to be perfectly at ease, and said he hoped that the whole party would meet in the capital, for he should not suffer the ladies to leave Derbyshire unattended, who he trusted would not reject his protection on their journey, or his services when it was concluded. But for the ties of relationship subsisting between the speaker and herself, Miss Neville would have expressed her sentiments in pretty strong language on his thus assuming the care of watching her steps: even in the most favourable light she could view this display of zeal for her welfare, she considered her admitting his right to the exercise of it an act of disloyalty towards De Eresby; she therefore in a steady tone observed, “ that should her aunt intend paying a visit to the metropolis, when Mrs. Hayman quitted Chesterfield, the party might find it convenient to travel together; but on no other grounds was there a probability of Mr. Williamson

being invested with the charge of either her or her friend."

Mr. Lindegreen, who had been no inattentive observer of the young clergyman's looks, either at Hardwick or in Mrs. Hayman's apartment, was now seriously sorry for the rebuff he had received. Desirous of appearing not to notice what Miss Neville had said, he shook hands with Mr. Williamson, expressing a wish to see him in London, and to prove his sincerity, gave him his card, though but the minute before he entertained no intention of encreasing the acquaintance. Somewhat restored by this mark of politeness from the stranger, Mr. Williamson felt his pride too much wounded to aim at subduing the resentment of his mistress that evening; he consequently departed with the other visitors, almost regretting that he had not practised self-denial in the first instance, as he feared his remaining all the afternoon without

being urged to stay, had excited the displeasure, the effects of which he most sincerely lamented, and knew not how to remedy.

The poem delivered to Miss Neville, by Mr. Lindegreen, possessing some claims to approbation, I shall here insert it; those who think it superfluous being at liberty to pass over to the next chapter, which will be found not the least interesting of the work.

From those gay meads where Avon leads his train,
Feeding the verdure of perpetual spring,
Where lib'ral Flora decks the painted plain,
And mingled perfumes load the zephyr's wing :

From the soft scenes where youthful fancy stray'd,
The thymy hills, the blossom'd vales along,
While echo to my ear sweet sounds convey'd,
Lapp'd in the extasy of sacred song :

(Ye bowers of bliss ! ye seats of joy ! farewell)
Where the sooth'd sense oft in attention hung,
And caught th' ideal accent as it fell,
In dear illusion from my Delia's tongue.

Unmourn'd, unknown, and unendear'd, I go,
To face the terrors of the burning line ;
Ah me ! no friend to share the pangs of love,
Or in sweet sympathy of sorrow join.

What, tho' malignant meteors vengeful gleam,
And angry lightnings fire the brazen skies,
What tho' the sun's intolerable beam
Bids sick'ning influence from the deep arise :

Tho' the North frowns, on wings tempestuous borne,
And troubled ocean from his centre raves ;
The breast by sorrow steel'd, beholds with scorn
The furious whirlwind and the war of waves :

Tho' the wild elements in discord rise,
And Fate's pale banners o'er the deep display ;
Insulting billows and incumbent skies,
Bend not my purpose nor obstruct my way.

But forc'd my Delia's presence to forego,
Forlorn I wander o'er the trackless main ;
Then deep infix'd I feel the shaft of woe,
Then droop the victim of undying pain.

For I no more my Delia's voice shall hear,
Sweet as a cherub's silver-sounding lyre,
That voice, which oft has charm'd my raptur'd ear,
And bade my bosom glow with gentle fire.

That cheek, where Love conceal'd in dimples lay,
That swelling breast, the Graces snowy throne ;
That brow, where truth, as radiant as the day,
Confess'd in beauteous emanation shone ;

Those looks of mercy beaming from her eyes,
Those various charms no more shall dawn on me ;
By her unheard expends the tender sigh ;
“ Ye who have lost an angel, pity me !”

Come, bland Oblivion ! take a sorrower's part ;
Give me along the peaceful vale to stray,
To lose the pang that rends the pensive heart,
And wile the lagging hours of life away.

Then dewy morn no more shall hear the moan
Of Grief's pale son, sad votary of care !
Nor night, when Cynthia mounts her ebon throne,
Be wounded by the accents of despair.

Then the remembrance that I once was blest,
(Blest as the bird that haunts the summer's stream)
And the lov'd inmate of my constant breast,
Shall flit—the vision of a morning dream.

Ah no !—th' eventful rebel of the brain,
Bids the dear image of my Delia rise,
Still my torn bosom shoots with ceaseless pain,
And woes unbating fill my waning eyes ;

For, I not boast the easy changing heart,
Tho' round my brows e'en Death's black curtain
 hung,
Borne on the sigh that bids my life depart,
Her name will tremble on my falling tongue.

Ask when this brittle, sorrow-shatter'd frame,
Sinks low to earth in parent dust decay'd ;
Unquench'd by time or fate, the generous flame
Shall light thro' future worlds my anxious shade.

Wilt thou, bright object of my constant pray'r,
Hear the sad sighing of a heart in pain,
Nor overwhelm my bark beneath the blast Despair,
Nor hurl me on the rocks of cold Disdain * ?

* Note.—Although these stanzas have appeared in a periodical publication since the part of this work was written in which the worthy Physician's voluntary banishment is mentioned, I could not resist inserting the effusions of his muse in the place which I originally intended, as well as adding my tribute of praise to the memory of one whom I greatly respected when living.

CHAP. XXXIII.

How all the other passions fleet to air !
 As doubtful thoughts, and rash embrac'd despair,
 And shudd'ring fear, and green-ey'd jealousy.

SHAKESPEARE.

RESIGNED as De Eresby wished to be to the decrees of his beloved Constantia, there were seasons when the pangs of jealousy, and forebodings of evil, chased from his mind the pictures of domestic felicity, with which the creative powers of fancy was wont to cheer his lone hours. To Mr. Dornford alone could he disclose the cause of his uneasiness, that gentleman having witnessed the perturbed state of his mind, on hearing of the departure of Miss Neville, previous to being made acquainted with her motives for quitting London. He was to

him as communicative as it was possible for a lover to be to a man who had never felt the power of beauty, and who knew not the delight conveyed to the heart by expatiating on the perfections of a beloved object.

De Eresby chanced to be in a company at a private house, and more pleasantly entertained than the abstraction under which he laboured generally admitted of; when he was suddenly both surprised and alarmed by hearing Miss Neville's name given as a toast, by a gentleman whose appearance bespoke the man of fashion and consequence. Some of the company were West Indians, and enquired if the lady, whose health they had drank, was the daughter of the worthy Mr. Neville, formerly of Barbadoes? The gentleman who had given the toast, answered in the affirmative; saying, that chance had befriended him one day, when he recognized in the lady an old acquaint-

ance, whom he had been long endeavouring to find. Relating his excursion to Hardwick, Mr. Lindegreen (whom the reader's sagacity may have already discovered) said of Constantia what he really thought she deserved, expressing his sincere regret that the daughter of such a character was not placed in the sphere of life, in which, from her natural endowments and accomplishments, she seemed so perfectly qualified to shine. Carefully treasuring up every word uttered by Mr. Lindegreen, De Eresby, when the ladies withdrew, sought to engage his attention, nor was he unsuccessful. Mr. Lindegreen was flattered by the advances of the counsellor; and when insensibly led back to the subject lately discussed, his visit to Derbyshire, he communicated every particular which he actually knew respecting Miss Neville's situation, and one that he only conjectured, the young clergyman's

suit, which he imagined was neither accepted nor rejected, though he believed it was understood by all parties, that such a marriage would take place.

De Eresby needed no further information. Constantia happy, and protected by persons whose names were unknown to him, and receiving pleasure from the attention of a man whose fortune and rank in life were suitable to her own, although she had been in the zenith of her prosperity, and enjoying the countenance of her parents, was so dreadful a piece of intelligence, that, to his conceptions, there was not another evil in the catalogue of human miseries that could add to the poignancy of his misfortunes. Thus stung to the quick, De Eresby retreated from the society, to deplore in solitude his own confidence in a woman whom he now thought a perfidious designing creature; but when the ebullitions of

scorn had found vent, and the tumult within had in some measure subsided, Constantia, arrayed in all the dignity of injured virtue, appeared to the imagination of her exasperated lover. Subdued almost to infantine tenderness, the generous feelings of De Eresby now took the ascendancy, and he determined to judge for himself whether his mistress had forgotten her plighted faith, or whether her apparent desertion might not be imputed to the artifices of base incendiaries. Finding it utterly impossible to endure this internal warfare, and having no professional engagement that immediately required his presence in town, De Eresby resolved to set out for Chesterfield, and there to learn his final doom from Constantia, of whose truth and honour, in his cooler moments, he could not entertain a doubt. Having decided on this step, the occupations into which he necessarily plunged, that his ab-

sence might not be detrimental to the interests of any of his clients, gave such a turn to his thoughts, that the strong powers of his mind again took their proper tone ; and he had leisure for reflecting, that it was possible all these surmises respecting the addresses of the young clergyman, might originate in the reports of busy impertinents, who are every where a numerous class, and indefatigable in their labours to regulate the concerns of other people.

Having left De Eresby in so proper a way of thinking, let us return to Constantia, who, ignorant of his agitation and doubts concerning her, only thought of him as the possessor of her heart, and the person to whom she wished to communicate her joy in having secured the friendship and protection of Mrs. Hayman ; through that lady's liberality, she doubted not their union would be accelerated, and on its accomplishment she affected not to

conceal, that her hopes of happiness in this life were founded.

In the course of conversation with Mr. Cooper, a few days after the excursion to Hardwick, Mrs. Hayman had the satisfaction of discovering, that her father's family had settled in Cumberland, and were not unknown to him; but that none remained, except some very distant female relations, and the family name was extinct. The worthy man seemed much affected by the recapitulation of events, on which Mrs. Hayman's enquiries obliged him to dwell; and Constantia, to spare his feelings, insensibly changed the discourse to the subject of their approaching journey to the metropolis. This subject naturally led Mr. Cooper to ask Miss Neville, whether she meant to give her cousin a legal title to become her protector to the capital, as the good folks of Chesterfield had decided that such an event was in contemplation?

Her answer was quickly delivered, and carried conviction to the hearer.

Mrs. Hayman leaving the room, Mr. Cooper expressed great satisfaction in learning that Constantia had no wish for a permanent connection with her aunt. "I doubt not," continued he, "that with your good conduct and superior understanding, your cousin would have proved himself a worthy member of society, and entertained a due sense of your merits; but in becoming a part of the family of Williamson, you must have daily made such sacrifices to the mother, as would have embittered most of your enjoyments."

Constantia agreed with Mr. Cooper, and he proceeded:—"My wife knew Mrs. Williamson well; Doctor Gordon will give you her character; for *my* sense of her worth and goodness must remain buried in my heart. A faint resemblance which your friend, Mrs. Hayman, bears to her, had struck the

Doctor; and the more so, when that lady mentioned the name of her father, which was Mrs. Cooper's maiden name, and that she was born in Cumberland, also her native county. To-day I ascertained that their relationship was not distant. That Mrs. Hayman possesses the virtues of her relation, for your sake I most sincerely rejoice; and I hope, in forming any other connection, you will be equally fortunate; for you could not associate with persons of contracted minds without losing your present serenity." Mrs. Hayman returning at this moment, Constantia could not refrain from communicating to her the connection by marriage of Mr. Cooper with her family. This discovery gave to the meeting an interest, which was interrupted by the entrance of Doctor Gordon, who insisted on his friend's immediate departure, as he had brought letters from London for Mrs. Hayman, whose polite-

ness, he said, would get the better of an anxiety that was laudable, and lead her to keep them unopened till their departure.

Thus left to themselves, Constantia, at Mrs. Hayman's desire, broke the seal of a packet in which was inclosed another, bearing the mark of "New York Ship Letter," on the outside. The envelope from Mrs. Hayman's merchant was soon read; and the handwriting of the other being recognized to be that of Joseph Alvarez, brought tears of gratitude into her eyes, while anxiety to learn the contents, and dread of she knew not what, prevented her from desiring Miss Neville to relieve her suspense, by breaking the seal. This she at last summoned resolution to do; when the letter from the young Israelite was read, and was to the following purport:—

New York, 179—

“ I flatter myself, my dear Madam, you have not for a moment believed that my silence has proceeded from want of zeal in your cause. I could fill many pages with details of my unsuccessful attempts to gain intelligence of Mr. and Mrs. Clayton, but shall rather pass on to those particulars which I consider worthy of attention; though I fear the communication will only direct your enquiries to another channel, without satisfying your mind on the most essential point, that of ascertaining whether your son is at present in existence.

“ I have had the good fortune, Madam, to meet with persons who were resident in that part of the colony where Mr. and Mrs. Clayton, with many others, were attacked with the malignant fever, which proved so fatal in its consequences, and was assured that

there was no child at that time under their care; consequently the fever was not the cause of your loss.

“ Conversing more than once on this subject with my uncle, he related to me a remarkable occurrence, of which he had made a memorandum, and desired me to communicate the substance of it to you.

“ Soon after his arrival here, in the year 177—, a conference was held in this city, with the chiefs of some Indian tribes, whose boundaries were then newly marked out, and a treaty of amity concluded; by which means the peaceful possession of newly-settled plantations was insured to the inhabitants of the frontiers, who had hitherto been liable to the inroads of marauding parties of the savages. In the train of these peace-makers was a little boy, whom they had stolen three years before, according to their account, from within a mile of the place where it was

said Mr. and Mrs. Clayton had pitched their tent."

Constantia's voice here began to falter, but she endeavoured to proceed.

"The little demi-savage gained so many friends by his prepossessing countenance, and intrepidity of spirit, which manifested itself in various ways, that though claimed by no real parent, there were many who wished to receive him as their adopted child. One gentleman, the nephew of the Governor, with a liberality and zeal that reflects honour on his memory, sent him to England, that he might there have the advantages of early culture, and give full play to those vigorous intellectual powers, which, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which he laboured, were then conspicuous to the discerning eye of Mr. De Eresby."

The letter fell from the hand of Constantia; forgetting the weak state

of her friend, and every other consideration, and wholly absorbed by the joy, which was too powerful to be restrained at the possibility of her much-loved De Eresby's being the son of one so deservedly esteemed by her; she threw her arms round the neck of the astonished Mrs. Hayman, sobbing aloud, " It is too much! Happiness so unexpected I find more difficult to bear than the most poignant grief." At these words her pulse ceased to beat; she fell lifeless from the arms of Mrs. Hayman, who exerted herself without effect to support her.

The faithful attendant recommended by Doctor Gordon was yet in the house, and Miss Neville was soon, by her friendly aid, so far restored as to have her fears strongly awakened for the health and safety of her now doubly endeared friend, who had been sensibly affected by the violent effects of her agitation. Again taking up Alvarez's

letter, Constantia found that the death of Mr. De Eresby at Barbadoes was taken notice of, and that of his uncle following soon after, no person at New York heard more of Master Luke. The letter then proceeded as follows:—

“ After perusing this memorandum of my uncle’s, I made it my business to enquire of all the inhabitants of the city, if they remembered the arrival of such persons as Mr. and Mrs. Clayton. An intelligent old lady, a branch of one of the Dutch families originally settled here, when this place was first colonized, who delighted to talk of former times, was the only person who recollected, with precision, transactions of the period which I named. Her brother, she well remembered, interested himself in getting grants of land for a family of that name, who had a little boy with them that attracted her notice, from the mother’s calling him *Duke*; an appellation so uncommon,

that she had the curiosity to peruse the preamble of the grants, in order to ascertain the real name, when she found he was noted down as Marmaduke Clayton."

Mrs. Hayman now required the aid that she had formerly endeavoured to administer. The easy transition from the abbreviation of *Marmaduke* to *Luke*, which was suggested by the sanguine mind of Alvarez, made it not impossible that, in the person of the Mr. De Eresby attached to Constantia, she might recognize her long-lost and sincerely lamented son. Alvarez, ignorant that such a character as the adopted son of Mr. De Eresby was known in the metropolis of England, recommended the insertion of advertisements in the public papers, to ascertain in what manner the young Luke had been disposed of on the death of his patron; and had transmitted dates of every fact,

with names of places, which might call the circumstances to the recollection of any person in England, under whose care the boy might have been placed, either for education or other purposes. From these documents, he thought, an address might be framed which would excite the attention of any person capable of giving information on the subject.

The heart, long accustomed to repress the suggestions of hope, dreads to admit a guest so apt to deceive the wretched; fearful of its inability to encounter disappointment, it remains incredulous until it is actually in possession of its long delayed happiness. Thus it was with Mrs. Hayman. Constantia, ardent in her expressions, and easy of belief, where she imagined internal evidence assisted to corroborate collateral testimony, was almost displeased at the doubts of her friend. At

one moment her whole soul was elevated to ecstasy, and at the next, after listening to the tremulous accents of Mrs. Hayman, her tears flowed in torrents. Every tender emotion which the affection of De Eresby had awakened was then predominant; to enjoy his society but for one half hour, would repay her for all the agitation of spirits she had undergone; but alas! that was unattainable.

A summons to attend a stranger, who called at the desire of Mr. Lambton, to confer with her on business, obliged Constantia to give some attention to present objects. The possibility that the unknown visitor might be her brother, who, from prudential reasons, chose not to announce himself by name, was the first thought that occurred on this unexpected incident. Endeavouring to assume a tranquil air, she left Mrs. Hayman, after having

first told her, whom she supposed was her visitor.

Assailed by apprehensions too strong to be accounted for, Constantia found herself almost deprived of the power of proceeding, when the first glimpse of the stranger disclosed to her view De Eresby! She was irresistibly impelled to spring forward to his embrace, and to declare that no power on earth should again separate them; but the full warm tide of affection collected at the heart flowed back to its source, at perceiving his constrained and embarrassed air. His motives for now seeking her, she believed, must be to break off all farther connection; and probably to say, that he had formed another, more likely to conduce to his advancement and happiness. The latter consideration touched so tender a string, that it was with some difficulty poor Constantia could refrain from

shedding tears. Her eyes, already swoln and bearing marks of recent agitation, and averted from those of De Eresby, spoke more audibly to his feelings than the most elaborate defence of her conduct could have done. Forgetting his resolution to upbraid her for her proceedings towards him, and to investigate into her actual situation before he explained his reasons for coming into her presence in opposition to her commands, he approached with the timidity and anxious solicitude of real affection, requesting to learn from the lips of one he so tenderly regarded, if the proof he had now given, that his attachment was not to be weakened by absence, was displeasing or otherwise?

Constantia's spirits had supported her, while she believed her lover to be unjust; but the endearing accents of kindness thawed the reserve with which she had been endeavouring to fortify

herself. De Eresby, too well acquainted with what passed in her mind, from contemplating the variations of her countenance, pressed her with fervour to his bosom, intreating pardon for having, even in thought, doubted her constancy and truth. In that moment what did not Constantia endure! Sensible that a few minutes must decide whether the surmises of Alvarez were to be cherished or disregarded, her frame was agitated to agony. De Eresby found himself unequal to the task of tranquillizing her spirits; while his own fears were wrought up to such a pitch, that he now imagined Mr. Lindegreen's communications were but too true, and that some fatal mystery would be unravelled, whenever the excess of her emotion had so far subsided as to suffer her to express to him the cause which excited it. Unable to restrain his impatient desire of knowing to whom she was indebted for pro-

tection, he begged her to end a suspense, the tortures of which could not longer be endured, by candidly informing him, if any other claims existed to supersede his title to her confidence and love.

“ Judge not thus harshly of my silence,” said Constantia, eagerly, “ while you allow me to introduce you to a much-valued, long-esteemed friend of my own family, to whom I have had the power of shewing some trifling attentions, which she has most abundantly repaid, by allowing me to consider her as a newly-found parent. She is prepared to regard you for my sake, and to promote our union; yet I wish to practise some little deception, by now naming you to her as my brother Montagu. Both of us imagined that the stranger who enquired for me was him, and she conceives that she will recollect his features,

though he was little more than two years old when she last saw him."

De Eresby acceded to this proposal, convinced, from the impressive manner in which Constantia spoke, that "more was meant than met the ear," and also not a little desirous of seeing a person already so far interested in his concerns, though unknown, as to be willing to lend her aid to the accomplishment of all his hopes of happiness.

Constantia, thankful for his compliance, trod almost on air, as she requested her lover to follow her up stairs, whom she preceded into the room a few steps, to apprise Mrs. Hayman that Montagu was come to ask her blessing, and to offer thanks for the great kindness she had manifested to his sister.

At the moment that Mrs. Hayman glanced her eye on the countenance of

De Eresby, she underwent a sensible change. "Merciful Heaven," said she, "what do I see? the very look of my husband when at his age! Forgive, Sir, the wanderings of an unhappy parent; guilty, it is true, but not in intention. You are not Mr. Neville's son; do the instinctive workings of nature declare to you that I may hail you as mine?"

"Lady," said De Eresby, while he involuntarily bent on one knee, and carried the hand to his lips which she had extended towards him, "I shall be but too happy if the emotions which now swell my bosom are awakened by the sight of the author of my being. If I must repress the tide of joy, which now steals over my ravished senses, I shall wish I had never felt its influence. If I am your son, you will know me by this mark:" opening his collar, De Eresby displayed, to the longing eyes of Mrs. Hayman, a spot on the left

side of his throat, which resembled a ripe mulberry ; a token so strongly imprinted on her remembrance, that on perceiving it she no longer attempted to restrain her feelings. Her full-fraught heart could not find relief in words. Locked in the embraces of her son, but for the kind assiduities of Constantia, he might soon have clasped an inanimate piece of clay ; when roused to exertion by the gentle accents of one for whom she now felt an increased interest, Mrs. Hayman endeavoured to express, that both were equally dear in her sight, and while she blessed her son, she said, it would be difficult for him to reward her excellent young friend as she deserved ; for to her kindness and unwearied efforts to reconcile her to life, he was, under Providence, indebted for all that it was in her power to bestow upon him.

To describe, in appropriate language, scenes so exquisite as this inter-

view with De Eresby and his mother, is scarcely possible.

For a time he was entranced with delight. To find such a parent, and that parent as devotedly attached to the virtues of Constantia as he could himself desire her to be, was happiness so surpassing all human belief, that but for the conviction which pressed home to his bosom, De Eresby would have been inclined to think the incidents of the last half hour an illusion of the senses. Seated by his mother, he ventured again to breathe forth vows of gratitude and fidelity to Constantia, which, sanctioned by such a witness, he trusted would be received without a single alloy to mutual happiness and confidence. Sincerely rejoicing at so unlooked-for a turn in their affairs, Constantia disclaimed reserve, declaring that Heaven had been so profusely lavish of blessings since she came to Chesterfield, that there now remained

not a wish ungratified, except that of being able to dispel the odium at present attached to the name of her brother, who, she trusted, would yet participate in the enjoyments she derived from the friendship of Mrs. Hayman. This sentiment reflected so much honour on the feelings of the sister, that little as the character of the brother was respected, for her sake both parties were sincerely desirous that his subsequent good conduct might obliterate what was reprehensible of the past.

In all the confidential conversations that had taken place between Mrs. Hayman and Constantia, the former had avoided mentioning that she had in her possession a miniature of her husband, drawn at the time of their marriage, and esteemed an excellent likeness. One view of this portrait would have inspired a hope in the latter, that De Eresby was her son. Unwilling as Mrs. Hayman was to speak

of one, whose tragical death was ever recalled to her remembrance, by reverting to events in which he was concerned, she yet, when left to her own meditations, by Miss Neville being called to her visitor, had become almost as confident as she had been that the protégée of Mr. De Eresby was her son; and to try if she could discover any resemblance between his features and that of her husband, had gone to her cabinet for the picture, which now lay enclosed in its case on the table. Without uttering a word, Mrs. Hayman put it into the hands of De Eresby; saying, in a low voice, to Constantia, as she quitted the room, "You must make the necessary communications, while I retire to my closet, to offer unfeigned thanks for the blessings of this day."

Of the Hayman's of Hamburgh, Constantia had more than once spoken to De Eresby; chiefly when informing

him at how early an age the instability of human enjoyments was pressed upon her observation, and the precarious tenure by which the property of commercial men was held. Mrs. Neville had related to her daughter the history of that family, with an intention to fortify her mind, by placing, in the strongest light possible, the dependence of human creatures on the favour and protection of an Almighty First Cause, to whom they should pray for strength to resist temptation ; that, by so doing, they would never be abandoned in the hour of trouble, or left to sustain the whirlwinds of passion and pressure of calamity without consolation.

In contemplating the features of his deceased parent, De Eresby, (now Marmaduke Hayman,) found himself subdued to softness. His feelings were too acute to admit of participation even with his beloved Constantia, who, unheeded by him, was a silent spectator

of the transitions from mournful regret to renovated hope, which, in their various gradations, were displayed on his countenance. At length awakening from his reverie, he begged Miss Neville's pardon for his neglect, intreating her to elucidate mysteries which to him were yet inexplicable. The letter of Alvarez tended to satisfy his mind on some points; and the communications of Constantia, respecting the mode of her introduction to Mrs. Hayman, excited the liveliest emotions of gratitude and praise.

“ Well might my mother say,” exclaimed the grateful lover, “ that I could never repay you for the benefits conferred upon us both ! But for your superior fortitude, inglorious ease would have been my choice. You awakened me to a sense of true honour. Though your sentence was most severe, my judgment applauded what my heart revolted at. And how soon have our trials

ended ! What has not your submission to the dictates of rigorous duty, and pious care of an afflicted sorrowing sister, accomplished !”

“ Talk not in this strain,” replied Constantia, “ I am the mere instrument in the hand of Providence. I have, to the best of my ability, from my youth upwards, endeavoured to mitigate the sorrows, and to relieve the distresses, of my fellow-creatures. In doing so I only followed the natural bent of my inclinations. I had the happiness of being early taught, that it was better to go to the House of Mourning, than to that of Feasting ; and I have experienced more calm delight from knowing myself an inmate of the former, than I ever did while a guest of the stately dome where Festivity and Mirth kept their court.”

“ Let it not be said,” returned the enraptured Hayman, “ that vivacity and sprightliness are not to be found

where the heart cherishes a due sense of the most exemplary piety, and acts in conformity to the precepts it inculcates. Teach me, my beloved friend, to keep a guard on my unruly passions; be my shield in prosperity, as I know you would have been in adversity. The latter state I believe less fraught with danger to myself than the former; but, with you for my companion, I can fear no evil."

In this sweet interchange of sentiments did the happy pair become still more endeared to each other. Mrs. Hayman, in discovering new excellence in her son, forgot, in a great measure, the melancholy series of events that for so many years had destroyed her happiness. Besides the comforts to be derived from the possession of such children, she had, in the worthy Mr. Cooper, met with an amiable friend, whose connection with the family of her father, added to his

own worth, made her consider him as a most valuable acquisition. Nor was she less sensible of the merits and claims of the worthy physician, through whom her transient residence in Chesterfield had been productive of so much good.

Mr. Hayman, on being introduced to his supposed rival, was no longer surprised at the suspicions of Mr. Lindegreen; it requiring but little penetration to discern his admiration of his fair cousin, who alone suspected not her power. The arrival of the stranger from London, enquiring for Miss Neville, was immediately known among the servants at the rectory, and as quickly communicated to their mistress; who, as soon as dinner was over, dispatched her son to Mrs. Hayman's, that she might learn who the visitor was. Struck with the appearance of Mr. Hayman, the clergyman at once supposed him to be a favoured

lover; and when announced as the son of Mrs. Hayman, his surprise could with difficulty be restrained. The explanation that followed, convincing him that his hopes were crushed for ever, he determined to make a virtue of necessity, and to cultivate the friendship of persons so worthy of general esteem.

CHAP. XXXIV.

Happy is he, and he alone, who knows
His heart's uneasy discord to compose;
In generous love of others good to find
The sweetest pleasures of the social mind;
To bound his wishes in their proper sphere,
To nourish pleasing hope, and conquer anxious
fear.

This was the wisdom ancient sages taught,
This was the sovereign good they justly sought,
This to no place or climate is confin'd,
But the free native produce of the mind.

LYTTLETON.

THE engagements of her son requiring his immediate return to the capital, Mrs. Hayman took but little time to arrange her affairs at Chesterfield, that Constantia and herself might have his protection on their journey.

Mrs. Williamson felt completely mortified by her niece's advancement, especially as it proceeded only from her own

intrinsic merit, and from more pains having been bestowed on the culture of her heart and mind, than on the acquisition of superficial accomplishments, which were considered by Mrs. Williamson as the most essential parts of female education. Mrs. Neville's studious habits, when under the protection of her father at Nettlebury, during her husband's first voyage to the West Indies, had often given offence to both sisters; neither had they failed to ridicule to each other, her presumption in talking of her husband's taste for literature, and the advantages she had enjoyed from his conversation and correspondence; for his easy manner of dispensing information, and the correctness of judgment, for which he was remarked, seldom were found to exist in the same character.—“Who would imagine,” said sister Anne to Miss Carleton (after repeating a conversation of this nature, which had taken place

in her absence between the father and daughter) “ that this paragon of perfection was nothing more than a *merchant's clerk*? I should think slaving all day at the ledgers, and writing letters of business, would make him hate the sight of either letters or books.” That Mr. Neville found leisure for cultivating his talents, and increasing his stores by reading, though diligent and attentive to the interests of his employers, the reader has been already apprized; and the secret by which he combined the man of business and study, namely, an abhorrence of vice, and abstaining from the society of the dissipated and thoughtless. Nor would it, in this stage of our narrative, have been necessary to bring forward such a proof of the littleness of mind of Mrs. Neville's sisters, if it were not to remark, that the survivor, Mrs. Williamson, retained a very lively remembrance of all that then passed; and on seeing

Miss Neville unpack her trunks, in which were collected, as her greatest treasures, part of the library selected for her use by her father, she said very pointedly, that a book-worm was her aversion; that women who read much were always sure to have a great many enemies; and that, in her idea, her own sex could not be too highly *accomplished*, but it was ridiculous for any of them to attempt becoming too *learned*. Her niece very mildly answered, that she was exactly of the same opinion respecting the folly of *women* imagining themselves to be *learned*; and that she had heard her father say, that the few men entitled to be ranked as such, were generally the least disposed to assert their own superiority; as the more assiduously persons of real abilities strove to extend their knowledge, the more sensible they were of the limits beyond which human ingenuity in vain seeks to pass. Little as Mrs. Williamson

understood of her niece's real sentiments, the latter was fully apprized of her's; and until her departure from the rectory, had scarcely ventured to open a book for fear of exciting displeasure. Her library, however, proved to Mrs. Hayman an invaluable acquisition; nor did the cheerfulness with which Miss Neville devoted whole hours to reading aloud to her, pass unregarded by either herself or Doctor Gordon, who in consequence supplied her with novelty of the best kind.

Leaving Mrs. Williamson to the full enjoyment of her own opinions respecting the necessary qualifications of young women, we shall follow to London a groupe who considered such qualifications only as sources of amusement, but in no degree to be prized, if ostentatiously displayed to a crowd of strangers, and withheld from others, till solicitation had been so frequent, as

to make the tardy compliance of little or no value.

On entering the capital, each party in silence recollected with fervent gratitude, the abundant cause they had to rejoice at the changes which in so short a space of time had been wrought in their favour. Mrs. Hayman, more pleased with her son as she had opportunities of discerning his worth, trusted entirely to his management for the disposal of herself and Constantia; Mr. Hayman had given orders by letter for lodgings to be hired for their reception in as retired a situation, and as near Lincoln's Inn, as could be procured. Stopping at an Upholsterer's in Holborn, to whom he had given the commission, he found that Southampton-row, at the back of Bedford House, was the spot on which suitable apartments had been obtained. After seeing the ladies safely housed, he proceeded to St. Helen's, where, to his great

satisfaction, he found Mr. Lambton, to whom he gave sincere pleasure by the tidings he communicated. Eager to see the mother of his protégée, Mr. Lambton hesitated not a moment in accompanying him to Southampton-row; where the worthy man received those acknowledgments so justly his due, but which minds like his require not to stimulate them to do good. To reimburse the pecuniary obligations he had conferred upon her son, would have been very easy to Mrs. Hayman; but the debt of gratitude she felt never could be cancelled.

Miss Neville was not without her share of congratulation from her old friend; for, independent of the good fortune that had attended her in Derbyshire, there had just arrived letters and remittances from Barbadoes, which he was sure would give her great pleasure. The gentleman for whom Montagu Neville had become security in

the life-time of his father, and whose disappearance from the island had occasioned his first embarrassments, was now returned a rich man; and, what was still more surprising, with a determination to pay the demands of all those to whom he was indebted. Meeting his friend plunged into difficulties, who had on his account sustained so heavy a loss, he not only repaid the whole sum with interest, but offered to support him in any new undertaking, or to make him the manager of his own property in the West Indies, as he intended to come to England to enjoy the fruits of his labour. "His offer," continued Mr. Lambton, "your brother has accepted; and his principal creditors here are so much pleased with his exertions for their benefit, and his present remittances, that they say he shall have his own time to pay the remainder, and that he was always an honest fellow; nor would he have ever

given us cause to suspect him to be otherwise, had he not been led astray by bad connections, which in this great city is the ruin of many, who have not like him the resolution to withdraw, but are led on from the commission of folly and extravagance to the depth of misery and guilt." Constantia thanked Mr. Lambton for his friendly zeal, as she doubted not it was through his representation so much of the former resentment of the gentlemen concerned had been subdued; while she earnestly hoped that Montagu would prove himself to be deserving of their future confidence and good opinion.

Mrs. Hayman's first solicitude on being settled in town, was to convey to young Alvarez tokens of her regard and friendship; nor did her son fail to transmit his thanks for the services rendered to himself and connections, by the persevering zeal of one whom he hoped to hail as his friend, and to

receive under his own roof in England. In expressing his gratitude to the young Israelite, he begged that he would also take the trouble of tendering his acknowledgments to the old lady, whose curiosity to learn his christian name had tended so materially to restore a long lost son to the arms of an affectionate parent.

Having thus rewarded my heroine for all her sufferings, little remains to be said on any subject in which she is interested, but what the imaginations of my readers have already suggested. I must, however, as in duty bound, say a few words respecting those persons who have made any prominent figure in this narrative.

Lady Darlington, soon after her removal to Bath, encountered that relentless enemy whose inroads neither wealth nor power can guard against. Her husband, for many years successful in all his undertakings and projects,

had the mortification to discover, at too late a period of his life, that there were more certain roads to contentment and happiness than those selected by ambition. Deriving little satisfaction from the conduct of his son-in-law, on the death of his wife he listened to his daughter's proposal of separating from her husband, to whom he transferred the settlement of two thousand a year, which he had given to her on the death of his son Henry. Rochford willingly agreed to such an arrangement, though not till his lordship had secured the annuity to him for life.

Still the slave of what is falsely denominated *pleasure*, and a visionary in politics, Mr. Rochford is, however, not without his admirers. That philanthropy and universal benevolence which embraces the good of the whole species, while it banishes from our remembrance the duties we owe to our kindred and country, is with him a fa-

avourite topic for declamation; and while he dazzles the imaginations of his hearers by the speciousness of his reasoning, they perhaps do not recollect, that he only is the most useful and most valuable member of a community, who by example and precept induces others to become virtuous citizens and respectable fathers of families. If in soaring too high we overlook the lesser charities, we shall like Rochford be only respected and esteemed where we are not known.

Mrs. Rochford, though in the midst of splendour, and certain of becoming a peeress, could not support the dullness and gloomy state with which she is surrounded in her father's house, but for the hope of that event, which will enable her to start once more as a candidate for celebrity; anticipating too, with no small delight, her superiority to her husband, and the vexation he must en-

dure at having no controul over the person or fortune of his daughter.

Lady Selina Ormsby, to the great joy of her female married acquaintance, is herself a matron. Notwithstanding her ambitious views, she has been led to the altar by a gentleman of no higher rank in society than the husband of her sister Lady Olivia; and as the last married pair have made fashion the object of their worship, it is rather unlucky that neither bride nor bridegroom are provided with a sufficient quantity of that dross, which would enable them to display to advantage the taste for splendid amusements which both possess in so eminent a degree.

Mrs. Ormsby has the happiness of seeing her sons respectably married and settled in her own neighbourhood, while the jointure-house at which she resides, is the spot where all the branches of her family frequently as-

semble, to enjoy the pleasures of her society.

Miss Plimpton is not yet tired of lashing her neighbours, nor does she ever want hearers, though the parties thus amused by her sprightly sallies, are morally certain that their conduct or conversation furnishes materials for her next dish of scandal. This is generally made poignant enough to please all palates, though in more instances than one the fair *Cuisiniere* has been much against her inclination compelled to taste of the food she had prepared for others.

Mr. and Mrs. Vanderdrusen enjoy that domestic felicity, which, from their desire to contribute to the happiness of others, they are so justly entitled to. Miss Mansell, though on the wrong side of thirty, is yet busily employed in pursuing her imaginary conquests, and planning schemes of future aggrandisement, by these means overlooking the

rational sources of delight which she might at all times command, in proving herself a dutiful daughter and affectionate sister.

Mr. Athersey has not found more important avocations than those which we have formerly mentioned; and he fails not to *forget* his most intimate acquaintance, whether male or female, if they chance to be in company whom *nobody knows*; his own vacant countenance, however, is as well known in Bond-street and its vicinity as is his ardent desire of *notoriety* in the circles in which he moves.

The worthy attornies of St. Helen's have not hitherto discovered, that success in the law is unattainable, but by the practice of that narrow policy which foment differences among friends and neighbours; a person once their client is always their friend; the strongest proof that can be given of their scorning to sacrifice, at the shrine

of private emolument, the interests of those who consider them entitled to confidence and respect.

The humble Somers finds his industrious efforts to provide for his family successful beyond his expectations; his children spring up around him healthy and vigorous, all equal sharers of the affections of their parents, and early taught that the independence, which is the fruit of honest labour, is the only kind of acquired wealth of which a man has any cause to be proud.

The worthy and venerable physician of Chesterfield, after attaining to honourable old age, now sleeps with his fathers; nor is his name ever mentioned by the poorer inhabitants, without their relating some instance of his generous care, and the exertion of his skill in behalf of themselves or connections. Those who were of a rank in life to appreciate his worth in all its forms,

mourn their physician, their friend, and counsellor, in the person of Doctor Gordon, whose humble piety, gentle manners, and intrinsic qualities of both head and heart, made him an honour to a profession, in exercising the duties of which, too many become callous to distress, from the frequency of its recurring to their sight. May all who possess the philanthropy and medical knowledge of Doctor Gordon, like him be as conspicuously placed for an example to others.

The arrival of Mr. Charles Hayman and family from Russia, soon after the marriage of Constantia with his nephew Marmaduke, was an accession to the happiness of Mrs. Hayman and her children, the more highly prized, because altogether unexpected. To find a son of his brother's so deserving of general esteem, whose entrance into life had been marked with vicissitudes so extraordinary, and circumstances so

apparently unpropitious, yet terminating so honourably to himself and all connected with him, gave to the heart of the worthy Mr. Hayman a pleasure too exquisite to be described. Himself full of years, the father of sons and daughters who were an honour to their parents, he returned with his wife and one daughter to his native country, there to spend the evening of his life in the exercise of the domestic virtues; free from the turmoils of ambition and the parade of a court. To his two sons he relinquished that business by which he had acquired opulence; to his eldest daughter, who had been some years before married to a respectable British merchant, settled at Riga, he gave, on his departure from Russia, a handsome present, in addition to the moderate dower her husband had received on their marriage.

Surrounded with comforts of so superior a kind, blessed in the society of

persons so truly deserving of esteem, with what heart-felt gratitude did Constantia ask her beloved Hayman if it were possible that their felicity could admit of increase? and whether, if they had been nursed in the lap of ease, they would, at this period of their lives, have known so well how to estimate the blessings they enjoyed? “ But for my accumulated distresses,” said she, “ De Eresby might never have been known to me, though the recollection of the Highlander always awakened a sigh of regret, that one whose sentiments appeared to be so much in unison with my own, should never again be likely to meet my sight.” “ Judge, then, my beloved Constantia,” replied her husband, “ by your own sensations, what mine must have been, who had for so long felt myself like a drop of water in the wide ocean, seeking in vain for its fellow drop. Never had I before experienced the

same delight in conversing with any other of your sex; and, true as the needle to the pole, my heart vibrated at the sound of a voice, whose melodious tones had frequently, in imagination, assailed my ear in the depth of solitude, when remote from the "busy hum of men." To our children may we relate the incidents of our past lives, that they may learn, from our example, that to be virtuous is to be happy; and that it is not in the indulgence of private inclinations the most exquisite gratifications are to be found."

" Thus oft in tender talk,
" They saw the summer sun go down the sky."

In the moderate use of the blessings of this life, in the bosom of her family, in performing deeds of charity, and in partaking of the pleasures of virtuous friendship, Mrs. Hayman finds that peace and satisfaction, which in

the cheerless cell of a monastery, practising self-denial and stated acts of devotion, eluded her grasp. Judging wisely that the situation of her son and daughter in life required that they should mix more with the world than they could do if she were an inmate of their house, she purchased a sweet retreat on the banks of the Thames, where they frequently withdrew from the smoke of the capital, to breathe a purer air, to be freed from the restraints of ceremony, and to enjoy her society. In prevailing on the worthy Mr. Cooper to participate in the pleasures of her retirement, she secured to herself a rational companion, and contributed to render his latter days more calm and serene than they would have been had he continued to live alone, bereaved as he was of the objects of early affection.

Mr. Hayman, her brother-in-law, settling not far from the same spot

kept up that intercourse between the families which tended to unite them in the bonds of affection as much as they were by those of consanguinity. Mr. Williamson, in his visits to London, being an inmate of his cousin's house, and a frequent visitor of the elder Mrs. Hayman, was often in the company of her niece, whose charms banished from his remembrance that he had been subdued by any other fair enslaver. The lady, "nothing loth," soon became, with the approbation of her parents, his bride; and this connection drew the two families still closer together.

Montagu Neville, meanwhile, shut out by his own imprudence and extravagance from the advantages which he would otherwise have derived from the countenance of his father's first patron and friend, was compelled to labour hard for a maintenance; all that he gained above being immediately transmitted to England, and divided amongst

his creditors by Mr. Lambton. After he has suffered a few years longer, and proved that his reformation is not merely dictated by necessity, and likely to cease with the cause, Mr. Hayman, senior, intends to invite him to return to England, when he will prove that his friendship for Robert Neville was too firmly rooted, not to be extended to a son who inherits any portion of his virtues.

Laura, the accomplished, beauteous, elegant, mercenary mistress of the baronet, the Jew, the merchant, and half the town beside, is a living monument of the fatal effects of the course of life which she has chosen. Though yet in her meridian as to years, her palsied limbs refuse their office. She is borne from couch to couch, little able to partake of the pleasures of social intercourse, from the bodily pain which she suffers; of the mental anguish which it is her lot to endure, none can speak with

precision. Let us hope that the warning has not been sent in vain; and, though the remembrance of the past cannot be obliterated, should the future be free from error, the tears of sincere penitence may yet wash away the stains of guilt, and the aspirations of a contrite heart find favour in the sight of a justly offended but merciful Deity.

While we drop the tear of commiseration for human frailty, may we never lose our abhorrence of vice, or forget that, however adorned by outward trappings, her votaries are seldom permitted to flourish long with impunity. Though virtue is oftentimes forced to retire to humble obscurity, there to labour hard for a scanty pittance, even in the lowly shed may be found *health*, *peace*, and *contentment*, guests rarely to be met with, and highly to be valued for the blessings they diffuse. Vain would be the attempt to seek in the haunts of

luxurious ease for companions capable of supplying their place.

If the example of Constantia Neville supports the drooping spirits of one child of adversity, one writhing under the agony of unmerited reproach, may they, like her, prove themselves superior to their calumniators, by striving to become useful members of society, and fearing not to administer aid to a sick or sorrowing sister, when they remember who it was that said, "Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbour unto him that fell among thieves?"

FINIS.



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